

# THE LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

No. 62.—VOL. III.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING JULY 16 1864.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[RUY MEETS THE COUNTESS PANZOLA AT THE CAPTAIN-GENERAL'S.]

## ISLA GRANDE.

### CHAPTER XXVIII.

#### RUY AT THE CAPTAIN-GENERAL'S.

THE eagerness and impatience with which Ruy, meanwhile, had urged his little craft towards Cuba, can be understood without a lengthy description. Not only did the rescue of Yola and the punishment of her oppressor depend on his obtaining speedy assistance, but the deliverance of Count Regla and his whole party was depending on the promptness and efficiency of our hero's appeal to the Captain-General. Night and day the boat went on, under sail and oar, for three days, during which time Ruy slept but little, and then the voyagers reached Bataviano, on the south side of Cuba, twenty-eight miles from Havana.

Leaving his boat and his fellow-islanders at this place, Ruy procured a good horse and set out for the capital, which he reached at the moment when it were its gayest and most stirring appearance, at nightfall. He was familiar with it, having been there to sell hammocks, as previously mentioned, and he took his way direct to a little inn near the Plaza de Armas, procured the necessary care for his horse, washed himself of his travel-stains, and took some refreshments.

A band was playing on the Plaza, in front of the palace of the Captain-General; the pasesos were crowded with promenaders, among whom haughty grandees, priests in broad-brimmed hats, and soldiers were prominent; ships of every nation were enclosed in the bay; salutes were being fired from the different forts surrounding the metropolis; the evening breeze from the sea was beginning to make itself felt in gentle zephyrs; and every street and house displayed the brilliancy and liveliness peculiar to the habaneros at that hour—the whole forming a scene that seemed a mockery to the sad heart of Ruy.

The only redeeming features of this characteristic spectacle, to our hero, were the indications he beheld of the Captain-General's presence, his palace being brilliantly lighted, and there being a sufficiency of guards and aides visible, in the bustle of going and

coming, to show that one of his excellency's popular balls was to be the event of the evening. In fact, his excellency had just returned from his summer residence at the foot of the Principe, and a select assemblage at the palace was to honour him on the occasion.

Learning this fact by inquiry, Ruy experienced a keen sense of relief.

"I shall see him forthwith," he thought, as he took his way from the inn towards the elegant residence. "Business may be out of place at such a time, but there's no time to lose."

He hastened to make himself and his mission known to one of the prim-looking guardsmen at the entrance of the palace.

A close scrutiny, a momentary hesitation, and Ruy was placed in the keeping of a second officer of the Captain-General's household, and ushered into a private reception-room in the interior of the building.

"Be seated, señor," said the officer, politely. "I will announce you to his excellency."

"Perhaps you had better take my letter and this ring," said Ruy, producing them. "I must assure myself of his excellency's notice."

The officer took the visitor's credentials, again bowing, and passed into an adjoining apartment, affording him a brief opportunity of remarking the splendour around him.

The hum of voices soon reached his ears, in connection with footsteps and the movements of doors, and then followed some signs of commotion, sufficient to indicate that the Captain-General was dismissing a party of friends or officials.

The next instant a tall man, of middle age and commanding presence, came out of the minor apartment, turning over the count's letter and seal in his hands.

This gentleman, Ruy instantly comprehended, was his excellency, and he promptly arose and bowed, exchanging polite greetings with him.

"Is it possible," the Captain-General then said, "that my esteemed friend is in such trouble and peril? Walk into my cabinet, señor, and give me full particulars of this matter."

The kind and sympathetic manner of his excellency placed Ruy quite at ease, little as he was used to intercourse with titled personages, and his face brightened with hope as he followed the noble-hearted official to the room mentioned.

"By your appearance, you are the count's son?" resumed the Captain-General, when they were both comfortably seated. "Your resemblance to him is striking."

Ruy stammered a little, and explained that he was not related to Count Regla, adding that his name was Leol.

"Ah—yes," soon remarked his excellency. "It is here, in the letter. Singular resemblance!"

He finished reading the count's letter, and a look expressive of deeply painful feelings came over his face, as he looked up from it.

"This is surprising," he ejaculated. "All the silver—the whole party marooned—and the pirates sailing away unharmed and jubilant. It is strange what a career that man has run—that Callocarras! How singularly fortunate he is in all his movements! He's as sure to find out the movements of our merchantmen and treasure-ships as he is to avoid our cruisers. But tell me the full particulars of the count's situation."

Ruy complied with this injunction, briefly narrating everything essential to a realization of the whole matter.

"I see—I see," said his excellency, when Ruy paused. "How long have you been on the way here?"

"Three days."

"And the count and his friends had provisions for only four! Surely, their peril is imminent! Do you know the location of the island on which they were marooned?"

"I do not know the exact latitude and longitude, your excellency, but I know its direction and approximate position, and shall have no trouble in piloting a vessel to it."

"I am glad to hear this assurance. Really, this is an awful business!"

He rested his head upon his hand, as if musing upon measures of relief.

"There's another terrible feature to the deeds of Callocarras, your excellency," added Ray, when the captain-general looked up. "I refer to the abduction of a young lady by the pirate."

Tears came to his eyes, as he thought of Yola, and his voice trembled and broke down.

"Speak freely, my young friend," said his excellency. "I see that you have a personal interest in this subject."

Ray narrated the abduction of Yola, and was much touched by the Captain-General's interest in his recital.

"Poor girl," was the comment. "These deeds have surely filled the cup of that wicked outlaw to overflowing. As earnestly as I have tried to compass his capture, I must arouse to a greater effort. Every war-ship on this station must be notified forthwith. The information you bring us must be used to advantage. Let me serve you some refreshments, Senor Leol, while I consult my friends and advisers, and I will then talk with you further."

He touched a bell, which was instantly answered by the appearance of a servant, gave his orders, excused himself, and vanished with an air of prompt business that made Ray's heart considerably lighter than it had been since Yola's abduction.

"Thus far all is well," he muttered. "Heaven grant that a general hunt be speedily made for the villain!"

He had mused but a few moments when a couple of domestics appeared, bringing him a liberal and most tempting repast. He was a little embarrassed by the sumptuousness of everything before and around him, and by the officious attention of the servants to his wants, but he ate a hearty repast to make amends for his late short allowances, and the domestics retired. A few moments more of thoughtfulness passed, and his excellency came back to him.

"My resources for this emergency, Senor Leol," he said, "might be better, but I am glad they are no worse. In the morning, but no sooner, I shall be able to despatch you, with a good commander, to a brig-of-war that is lying at Cienfuegos, completing some slight repairs. This commander is Captain Brote, whom you may know by reputation. He is able and reliable, and will be active in the hunt for the pirate, his professional pride having been already touched by the impunity with which the villain has so long troubled our commerce and defied our cruisers. Will you be my guest till morning?"

Ray felt a little out of place at a gay palace on such an occasion, and excused himself, saying that he would remain at his little inn.

"Very well, senor. Come to me early in the morning, and I will introduce you to Captain Brote, and you can talk up the particulars of your proposed action with him. He is now at his father's in the country, on a brief visit, but I shall instantly despatch a messenger to him, and will have him here by daylight. Meanwhile every possible provision and preparation will be made. I shall be up all night myself, for I am determined not only to rescue Count Regla, but make an end of the pirate."

Ray bade his excellency adieu after a few further observations, and turned to depart. He found that the guests of the evening had commenced arriving, and that the news he had brought, having been discussed with his excellency's friends and repeated, was forming a lively topic of discussion among them.

Shrinking from the curious and inquiring glances fixed upon him, Ray passed along, and was traversing the outer hall when a hand was placed on his arm, and a musical voice said:

"Pardon me, senor. Can I have a moment's conversation with you?"

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

##### RAY IN A SINGULAR SITUATION.

Ray turned and paused. He beheld before him a woman of singular and handsome appearance, she having the large, soft eyes of the Cuban beauty, full of languor, yet showing slumbering fire; cheeks bright with crimson; and full, parted lips, somewhat voluptuous in their outline, as was her full and rounded form. She was evidently one of the guests of the evening, for her dress, which was low in the neck, was of some Oriental fabric, thin and shimmering, and covered with diamonds to resemble drops of dew. Diamonds gleamed on her neck and in her hair, and her hands and arms seemed blazing with the profusion of the same costly jewels.

While Ray was regarding her, she took his arm gracefully but rather familiarly, and drew him out of the current of arrivals now filling the entrance of the palace, into a little open recess, and said:

"You are the gentleman who brought the news of Count Regla's troubles?"

Ray bowed.

"And you've had an encounter with those terrible pirates?"

Ray again bowed.

The lady looked at him with apparent surprise, and toyed with her jewelled fan, as she continued:

"The Captain-General having mentioned your adventures, they have come to my hearing, Senor Leol. You see I am acquainted with your name. Allow me to introduce myself—I am the Senora Panzola—a widow. Your adventures remind me of my brother, who was lately taken captive by the dreadful pirate Callocarras, and who is now at my house recovering from a fever consequent upon the cruel treatment he received. The thought occurred to me that the information he had acquired respecting the pirate defences might be useful to you. Pardon my boldness, senor," and her eyes drooped, in apparent modesty, while she played coquettishly with her fan. "My anxiety to revenge my brother's sufferings and relieve our country from this terrible scourge may have carried me too far."

She half-turned away, the diamond dewdrops sprinkled over her silvery robe flashing like imprisoned sun-rays with her quick, graceful movement, but Ray detained her.

"The information your brother might be able to give me, Senora Panzola," he said, with his habitual natural grace, "would prove useful. How did he escape from the pirates?"

"I rescued him," was the reply. "He knows nothing about the situation of the island, senor—the pirates were too careful for that—but he used his eyes to such good advantage that he knows their number, defences, and various other particulars. Suppose you accompany me home in my carriage, senor? I can send you back in half-an-hour."

Ray reflected that it would be well to acquire all the information that he could regarding the pirates, in addition to the aid promised by Padre Lasso, and he therefore said:

"Many thanks, senora, for your kindness. I will go with you to see your brother, as the night is before me."

Ray did not see the singular gleam that shot from the languid eyes of the Senora Panzola, nor notice the quick glance she cast about her to see if any one was noticing them.

"Remain here a moment, senor," she replied, "while I order my carriage."

She glided away, but soon returned with a mantle flung over her dress, and her head covered with a lace veil.

"The carriage is waiting, Senor Leol," she remarked. "Follow me."

She glided through the gay crowd of incomers, Ray following her, descended the steps, and entered a handsome carriage that drove up, making room for Ray beside her.

"Home!" she said to the footman.

The order was repeated to the driver, the carriage-door closed, and they were driven rapidly away from the palace.

In a few moments the vehicle stopped before a large and costly residence, and Senora Panzola alighted and led Ray into the dwelling, which was furnished in the highest style of art.

"Have the carriage again at the door in half-an-hour," commanded the senora, addressing the footman, who had unlocked for her the entrance door. "Go!"

He had hardly vanished before she summoned a servant for lights, and said:

"As I said, Senor Leol, my brother is ill. Come with me to his room."

The servant went ahead with her lighted lamps, and Ray followed without suspicion.

They passed through an upper hall to a back room, the door of which was open.

"Enter, senor," said the lady. "Be seated while I see if he is awake and can see you."

Ray bowed, and passed into the room, expecting the servant to follow with the lights.

Instead of that, however, the door was swung to, with a sudden clang that showed it was made of iron, and a bolt was shot into the lock.

Ray was a prisoner!

"What does this mean, senora?" he demanded, noticing that the upper half of the door was open and closely grated. "What means this treachery?"

The beautiful face looked in upon him through the bars, but the woman made no reply.

He sprang toward the door, exerted all his strength upon it to no avail, and realized that he was helpless.

"You can't get out," said the senora, with a careless laugh. "Set down the lamps on the hall-table, Costa," she added, addressing the servant, "and go down-stairs."

The woman obeyed, and Senora Panzola looked in again on her astonished prisoner.

"You would like an explanation, would you not?" she said. "Well, I humour you by giving you one! My sick brother was a little fiction got up to entice you here!"

"But what object have you?" demanded Ray. "What do you want of me whom you never saw before? I assure you —"

"I know what you would say," interrupted the senora. "I have serious objections to your pursuit of Callocarras! My brother, Senor Nerle —"

"Senor Nerle!" repeated our hero in astonishment. "You are the sister of Nerle?"

"I am—since you appear to know him," was the defiant response. "He is a spy of Callocarras, and I am also a spy of the pirate. To him I owe these jewels," and she flung back her cloak and revealed her diamonds complacently; "to him I owe my costly robes, this house and its belongings, my great wealth, and, more than all the rest, the marriage into which I am about to enter with a real Castilian nobleman! So you see, Senor Leol, I really cannot permit you to go at large, stop my large remittances, and affect my standing in the estimation of my future husband. You are in a secure prison here, and you shall stay for the present!"

"And may I ask," said Ray, "what you intend doing with me?"

"Keep you here till my brother comes," was the reply. "Senor Nerle will know how to deal with you, and I propose to place you in his keeping."

Ray made an earnest appeal to the woman's heart, painted vividly the sufferings of his friends should he not come to their rescue; but she was adamant.

"It is useless to talk," she said, drawing from her belt a jewelled watch. "It's half-an-hour, and—ah! there's the carriage. I must go back to the palace, senor, so that I won't be connected with your disappearance, if search is ever made for you. Make up your mind to take it easy. I will come in to see you in the morning. Don't be afraid of being poisoned—Lallah keep you alive till my brother comes!"

With a low, silvery laugh, strangely like Nerle's, she closed an outer door of Ray's prison, locked it, and tripped down to her carriage, to be in time for the best of the festivities of the palace.

And Ray, convinced that escape was perfectly hopeless, paced to and fro, muttering:

"There will be no pirate queen to help me out of here! I must be shut up here till Nerle comes, and meanwhile Count Regla and his wife, with their whole party, will starve to death! And, oh, heaven! where is Yola?"

He groaned in the anguish of his spirit.

#### CHAPTER XXX.

##### RAY MAKES HIS WAY.

THE sensations of Ray in his prison, as he thought of the count and Yola, and remembered how completely everything depended on him, were for a time akin to despair.

He mused in speechless anguish.

"No," he at length resumed, "pirate queens are out of the question; so is the police. I might as well expect an earthquake to burst this trapdoor. All search for me to-morrow will be fruitless. Captain Brote will not sail, and if he does he will not find the island. The count and his whole family will starve to death. No relief save that of death will reach Yola. As to me, this tigress and Nerle will make short work of me when he comes!"

His situation was indeed appalling.

It was now clear to him why Callocarras had had such wonderful success as a pirate.

The villain had spies and agents in all the principal ports, and kept himself informed of all important commercial movements, and of all efforts that were made for his capture. And the extensive range of his resources was apparent, now that he was seen to have a spy in the most fashionable society of Havana.

But, as dark as everything seemed to him, Ray did not give way to the gloomy prospects he had enumerated. He remembered that the darkest hour frequently comes just before day, and summoned all his intelligence and resolution to his aid, looking for a way of escape.

It was certain, firstly and principally, that he must depend upon himself.

"Let me learn the nature of this den," he thought. "It's certainly a strong one—one that has been provided against this very use!"

He had been left in utter darkness, so that his sense of touch was his sole guide in this investigation, but this faculty was sufficient for his enlightenment. He speedily discovered, by groping about, that the apartment in which he was confined was not more than six or eight feet square. It was well furnished, having a little couch among its other contents. There was an indentation at one side of it, opposite the door, which appeared to have once contained a window.

"I see," he muttered. "I'm in a sort of impromptu dungeon fitted up by this dashing young widow against the arrival of such a troublesome visitor as is now in it."



He felt for his weapons, a couple of loaded pistols and a stout knife, which he had taken from one of the companions of the pretended priest at the desert island. He then tapped again upon the indentation in the wall which had suggested a former window.

"Now, was there an opening in this place or not?" he queried. "If there was, I am not so far from the outer world as I imagined."

This reasoning gave him great relief.

A further investigation convinced him that there had really been a window at that side of the room, and that it had been carefully covered by planks nailed to the wall.

"Yes," he proceeded, "here are the nail-heads—immense spikes. This knife will certainly do some cutting. I ought to get out!"

He did not wait to argue the probabilities in the case but instantly set to work.

The planking was composed of hard wood peculiar to the tropics, with the edges of the different pieces dove-tailed together, and the progress of Ruy in his task was both slow and painful; but he worked steadily at it for hours, until his arm ached, his hand was blistered, and the perspiration poured in streams from his forehead.

He then rested, again musing. He knew that it was now long past midnight, or about the hour when the woman was likely to return from the assemblage at the captain-general's, and he listened for her coming.

Much to his encouragement, he heard her return and bustle about awhile in the interior of the house, shutting doors, etc., and then everything became still, as if she had retired for the night.

The faintness with which these sounds came to his hearing told him that the doors between him and freedom were very thick and closely fitted. In fact, had it not been for the key-holes in them, he would have heard nothing of them.

"Yes, she has retired," he thought, after a few minutes of intense listening. "She's not a woman likely to break her rest, or to get up very early in the morning. I have a good opportunity for a further assault on the planking!"

He resumed work. Toiling with all his might, listening occasionally, thinking of his betrothed and his friends, praying inwardly for release from his prison—so Ruy passed several additional hours, and then he again paused to rest.

He knew that it must now be near the break of day, or even later.

"I have made quite a bowl in the planks," he muttered, feeling it. "Ah!"

The wood surely sprang a little under the pressure of his fingers, in the centre of the cut he had made!

"I must be getting through," he added, in a voice that was husky with emotion. "Let me see."

He wielded his knife a few moments more, and then he suddenly made a small hole in the planking, and a faint gleam of light streamed in.

How that feeble ray cheered him!

It seemed a reward for all he had done and suffered!

It told him that his first hope concerning the window had not been a vain one, and that he was really near the outer world—the scene to which he was so anxious to return.

He tumbled his couch to represent its occupancy during the night, and then returned to the aperture in a fever of excited emotions. Placing his eye at the hole, he peered out into an open court, and perceived that it was long after sunrise. He was beginning to rejoice anew, when, bringing his glances up from the yard, he noticed that there was an iron bar on each side of his opening, about six inches apart; in fact, that there was a stout grating on the outside of the planking.

This discovery plunged him into the greatest distress and disappointment, it showing him that his whole night's labour was scarcely a beginning toward effecting his escape.

A servant appeared in the yard at this juncture, and commenced splitting a block of wood, as a step towards making a fire, and cooking her mistress some breakfast.

And now occurred to Ruy one of those temptations which only the bravest of souls and clearest of heads can resist.

He suddenly conceived that he could, in a few minutes, enlarge the opening in the planking sufficiently to admit of his sending forth through it a loud cry for help.

Surely there must be people in the neighbouring houses who would hear him and come to his rescue.

This was one side of the case. The other was not so pleasant.

The voice of prudence assured him that his call might not be immediately heard by any right-minded person—that it might not reach very far outside of the court—and that the sister of Nerle would come

with attendant ruffians at the first cry, and silence him for ever.

Again, it would be easy for madame to explain that the person calling for help was a mad relative or drunken servant, and so thwart the good intentions of any well-disposed person who might chance to be within hearing.

"The case is just this," finally mused Ruy, summing it up. "If I cry for help now, and it fails, my whole project of escape is defeated. If I wait till to-morrow, I shall then have as good a chance as now, and there is the possibility that another night of labour will clear me, without the favour of anybody."

This last reflection was decisive.

As terrible as was the temptation to instant action, he resolutely dismissed it, feeling that he could not incur such a risk until he had seen what a second night of labour would bring forth.

"I will be hopeful," he thought, after a few minutes of mental convulsion. "I will conceal what I have done, rest, and see what the day will produce."

He noticed that the hole in the planking was the first thing likely to attract attention from any one at the door, and he deftly covered it, when all was again darkness around him.

After resting a few moments, Ruy would have resumed his labours had it not been for the imminent danger of discovery that would attend such a proceeding, both from within and without the building. It was hard for him to remain motionless when he reflected upon the situation of Yola and Count Regia, but it was clear he could not work undetected by day, and he threw himself on his couch, endeavouring to become calm and quiet.

The thinness of the planking at the aperture enabled the prisoner to detect many signs of life and movement without that would not otherwise have come to his notice. He waited and waited, with the best possible patience, until near the middle of the forenoon, every instant expecting the coming of his enemy, and at last he heard some one unlocking the outer door of his prison.

Ruy had barely time enough to place himself in a position to cover his operations in the planking, when the door in question was opened, and a light flashed into the apartment through the grating in the upper part of the inner door, and Senora Panzola made her appearance, peering cautiously through the opening upon her prisoner.

"Good morning, senor!" she said, politely. "I have brought you some breakfast. Here, Costa, pass it through the grating."

At this command the servant came forward and handed the food to Ruy.

"I suppose it's poison," he said, bitterly.

"No, indeed," replied the senora. "If you are afraid to eat it, I'll taste of it myself."

She put her jewelled hand through the bars, breaking off a piece of the food, and ate it, adding:

"There, you see it is good. Why should I kill you, senor? I prefer to leave you here till my brother comes."

"Very well," returned our hero, quietly. "I should certainly prefer to live until his arrival."

He conversed with her a moment, with as much pleasantness as he could assume, having determined to learn how soon Nerle was expected. Approaching the subject in a careless and roundabout way, he finally said:

"I suppose I shall see your esteemed brother to-day?"

"No, not for several days, most likely," was the response. "At any rate, I do not immediately expect him. I tell you this that you may understand your continued confinement, and not be too impatient."

Ruy was considerably relieved by this intelligence. He talked awhile with his visitor, wondering that a woman could be so cruel and heartless, and hiding the keen emotions which raged in his heart. She finally left him to himself, and he ate his meal, then resigning himself to a day of patient waiting.

Senora Panzola came again towards night, bringing him some supper, and again had a conversation with him. His stern and fearless manner seemed to win her admiration.

When she had gone, expressing a presumption that her brother would appear in a day or two, a look of resolution took permanent possession of his face.

"This night shall see me out of here," he thought. "I think it can be done."

He waited till all was still, and then resumed work. Retooled, occasionally listening, all night, making a hole in the planking large enough to afford him egress, and cutting away part of the wood enclosing the lower ends of two of the bars. He was compelled to see, however, at the approach of day, that another night would be required to complete the task, and he was for a few moments quite gloomy and disappointed.

Suddenly an idea occurred to him.

There was an awful risk in it, but he was getting desperate.

"That servant will be in the yard again," he muttered, "and if she should see the hole in the planking and a rope of some kind hanging from it to the ground, she would raise an alarm. Moreover, when her ladyship appears here, in answer to the servant's alarm, and sees this opening with a cord attached to the bars, she'll be likely to unlock the door and rush in here, without looking for me. And then—"

He started up abruptly, inspired with the necessary faith for action, and immediately tore the sheets and blankets of his couch into strips and tied them together, thus making a stout rope. Tying one end of it to the iron bars, with huge knots, so as to make it prominent in the aperture, he thrust the other end out of the window, and permitted it to fall to the ground.

He then seated himself in a position to be behind the door of his prison, should it be opened, and waited.

He had waited till broad daylight, and till a host of anxieties were torturing him, when he heard the servant in the court.

He had no time to speculate upon what would follow, for the servant instantly perceived the cord, and supposing that the prisoner had escaped, uttered some wild cries of surprise and alarm, and hurried back into the house.

In an instant, as it seemed to Ruy, cries of rage and consternation were heard issuing from the quarters of the Senora Panzola, and he detected that she was coming.

Crouching still closer to the wall, he heard the outer door open, saw the flashing of a light, heard the panting senora as she glanced through the aperture at the hole in the wall and the rope, and then she screamed wildly:

"True enough, he's gone!"

As Ruy had hoped and almost foreseen, the terrified woman instantly unlocked the iron door, swinging it back and rushing into the apartment, precipitating herself to the aperture.

The joy of Ruy at this moment was sternly savage. He uttered a cry that had little resemblance to anything human.

Even as the senora looked through the opening in the wall, and began to realize that the bars were unbroken and unmoved, Ruy dashed from the room, closing and locking the door after him, and shouted the single word:

"Farewell!"

The servant was in the hall, blocking the way, but Ruy thrust her aside, and a few bounds took him to the entrance of the dwelling. It was locked, but a window answered every purpose, Ruy dashing through the sash and glass into the street.

He was again free!

(To be continued.)

#### THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

THE following—being some of the superstitions of the past—will doubtless cause many of our readers to smile:

**January.**—He that is born in the month of January will be laborious and a lover of good wine, be subject to fidelity, yet he will be complacent and withal a fine singer. The woman born in this month, will be prudent housewife, rather melancholy but yet good tempered.

**February.**—The man that is born in the month of February will love money much, but ladies more; he will be stingy at home, but prodigal abroad. The lady will be humane and affectionate to her mother.

**March.**—The man born in the month of March will be rather handsome; he will be honest and prudent; he will die poor. The lady will be jealous, passionate and a chatter-box.

**April.**—The man who has the misfortune to be born in the month of April will be subject to maladies; he will travel to his disadvantage, for he will marry a rich heiress, who will make—what no doubt you understand. The lady of this month will be tall and stout, with agreeable wit and great talk.

**May.**—The man born in the month of May will be handsome and amiable; he will make his wife happy. The lady will be equally blessed in every respect.

**June.**—The man born in the month of June will be of small stature and passionately fond of children. The lady will be a personage fond of coffee; she will marry young.

**July.**—The man born in the month of July will be fat, and suffer death for the wicked woman he loves. The female of this month will be passionately handsome, with a sharp nose and fine bust; she will be of rather sulky temper.

**August.**—The man born in the month of August will be ambitious and courageous; he will have two wives. The lady will be amiable and twice married,

"There's another terrible feature to the deeds of Callocarras, your excellency," added Ruy, when the captain-general looked up. "I refer to—the abduction of a young lady by the pirate."

Tears came to his eyes, as he thought of Yola, and his voice trembled and broke down.

"Speak freely, my young friend," said his excellency. "I see that you have a personal interest in this subject."

Ruy narrated the abduction of Yola, and was much touched by the Captain-General's interest in his recital.

"Poor girl," was the comment. "These deeds have surely filled the cup of that wicked outlaw to overflowing. As earnestly as I have tried to compass his capture, I must resort to a greater effort. Every war-ship on this station must be notified forthwith. The information you bring us must be used to advantage. Let me serve you some refreshments, Señor Leal, while I consult my friends and advisers, and I will then talk with you further."

He touched a bell, which was instantly answered by the appearance of a servant, gave his orders, excused himself, and vanished with an air of prompt business that made Ruy's heart considerably lighter than it had been since Yola's abduction.

"Thus far all is well," he muttered. "Heaven grant that a general hunt be speedily made for the villain!"

He had mused but a few moments when a couple of domestics appeared, bringing him a liberal and most tempting repast. He was a little embarrassed by the sumptuousness of everything before and around him, and by the officious attention of the servants to his wants, but he ate a hearty repast to make amends for his late short allowances, and the domestics retired. A few moments more of thoughtfulness passed, and his excellency came back to him.

"My resources for this emergency, Señor Leal," he said, "might be better, but I am glad they are no worse. In the morning, but no sooner, I shall be able to despatch you, with a good commander, to a brig-of-war that is lying at Cienfuegos, completing some slight repairs. This commander is Captain Brote, whom you may know by reputation. He is able and reliable, and will be active in the hunt for the pirate, his professional pride having been already touched by the impunity with which the villain has so long troubled our commerce and defied our cruisers. Will you be my guest till morning?"

Ruy felt a little out of place at a gay palace on such an occasion, and excused himself, saying that he would remain at his little inn.

"Very well, señor. Come to me early in the morning, and I will introduce you to Captain Brote, and you can talk up the particulars of your proposed action with him. He is now at his father's in the country, on a brief visit, but I shall instantly despatch a messenger to him, and will have him here by daylight. Meanwhile every possible provision and preparation will be made. I shall be up all night myself, for I am determined not only to rescue Count Regla, but make an end of the pirate."

Ruy bade his excellency adieu after a few further observations, and turned to depart. He found that the guests of the evening had commenced arriving, and that the news he had brought, having been discussed with his excellency's friends and repeated, was forming a lively topic of discussion among them.

Shrinking from the curious and inquiring glances fixed upon him, Ruy passed along, and was traversing the outer hall when a hand was placed on his arm, and a musical voice said:

"Pardon me, señor. Can I have a moment's conversation with you?"

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

##### RUY IN A SINGULAR SITUATION.

RUY turned and paused. He beheld before him a woman of singular and handsome appearance, she having the large, soft eyes of the Cuban beauty, full of languor, yet showing slumbering fire; cheeks bright with crimson; and full, parted lips, somewhat voluptuous in their outline, as was her full and rounded form. She was evidently one of the guests of the evening, for her dress, which was low in the neck, was of some Oriental fabric, thin and shimmering, and covered with diamonds to resemble drops of dew. Diamonds gleamed on her neck and in her hair, and her hands and arms seemed blazing with the profusion of the same costly jewels.

While Ruy was regarding her, she took his arm gracefully but rather familiarly, and drew him out of the current of arrivals now filling the entrance of the palace, into a little open recess, and said:

"You are the gentleman who brought the news of Count Regla's troubles?"

Ruy bowed.

"And you've had an encounter with those terrible pirates?"

Ruy again bowed.

The lady looked at him with apparent surprise, and toyed with her jewelled fan, as she continued:

"The Captain-General having mentioned your adventures, they have come to my hearing, Señor Leal. You see I am acquainted with your name. Allow me to introduce myself—I am the Señora Panzola—a widow. Your adventures remind me of my brother, who was lately taken captive by the dreadful pirate Callocarras, and who is now at my house recovering from a fever consequent upon the cruel treatment he received. The thought occurred to me that the information he had acquired respecting the pirate defences might be useful to you. Pardon my boldness, señor, and her eyes drooped, in apparent modesty, while she played coquettishly with her fan. "My anxiety to revenge my brother's sufferings and relieve our country from this terrible scourge may have carried me too far."

She half-turned away, the diamond dewdrops sprinkled over her silvery robe flashing like imprisoned sun-rays with her quick, graceful movement, but Ruy detained her.

"The information your brother might be able to give me, Señora Panzola," he said, with his habitual natural grace, "would prove useful. How did he escape from the pirates?"

"I ransomed him," was the reply. "He knows nothing about the situation of the island, señor—the pirates were too careful for that—but he used his eyes to such good advantage, that he knows their number, defences, and various other particulars. Suppose you accompany me home in my carriage, señor? I can send you back in half-an-hour."

Ruy reflected that it would be well to acquire all the information that he could regarding the pirates. In addition to the aid promised by Padre Lasso, and he therefore said:

"Many thanks, señora, for your kindness. I will go with you to see your brother, as the night is before me."

Ruy did not see the singular gleam that shot from the languid eyes of the Señora Panzola, nor notice the quick glance she cast about her to see if any one was noticing them.

"Remain here a moment, señor," she replied, "while I order my carriage."

She glided away, but soon returned with a mantle flung over her dress, and her head covered with a lace veil.

"The carriage is waiting, Señor Leal," she remarked. "Follow me."

She glided through the gay crowd of ingenners, Ruy following her, descended the steps, and entered a handsome carriage that drove up, making room for Ruy beside her.

"Home!" she said to the footman.

The order was repeated to the driver, the carriage-door closed, and they were driven rapidly away from the palace.

In a few moments the vehicle stopped before a large and costly residence, and Señora Panzola alighted and led Ruy into the dwelling, which was furnished in the highest style of art.

"Have the carriage again at the door in half-an-hour," commanded the señora, addressing the footman, who had unlocked for her the entrance door. "Go!"

He had hardly vanished before she summoned a servant for lights, and said:

"As I said, Señor Leal, my brother is ill. Come with me to his room."

The servant went ahead with her lighted lamps, and Ruy followed without suspicion.

They passed through an upper hall to a back room, the door of which was open.

"Enter, señor," said the lady. "Be seated while I see if he is awake and can see you."

Ruy bowed, and passed into the room, expecting the servant to follow with the lights.

Instead of that, however, the door was swung to, with a sudden clang that showed it was made of iron, and a bolt was shot into the lock.

Ruy was a prisoner!

"What does this mean, señora?" he demanded, noticing that the upper half of the door was open and closely grated. "What means this treachery?"

The beautiful face looked in upon him through the bars, but the woman made no reply.

He sprang toward the door, exerted all his strength upon it to no avail, and realized that he was helpless.

"You can't get out," said the señora, with a careless laugh. "Set down the lamps on the hall-table, Costa," she added, addressing the servant, "and go down stairs."

The woman obeyed, and Señora Panzola looked in again on her astonished prisoner.

"You would like an explanation, would you not?" she said. "Well, I humour you by giving you one! My sick brother was a little fiction got up to entice you here!"

"But what object have you?" demanded Ruy. "What do you want of me whom you never saw before? I assure you —"

"I know what you would say," interrupted the señora. "I have serious objections to your pursuit of Callocarras! My brother, Señor Nerle —"

"Señor Nerle!" repeated our hero in astonishment. "You are the sister of Nerle?"

"I am—since you appear to know him," was the defiant response. "He is a spy of Callocarras, and I am also a spy of the pirate. To him I owe these jewels," and she flung back her cloak and revealed her diamonds complacently; "to him I owe my costly robes, this house and its belongings, my great wealth, and, more than all the rest, the marriage into which I am about to enter with a real Castilian nobleman? So you see, Señor Leal, I really cannot permit you to go at large, stop my large remittances, and affect my standing in the estimation of my future husband. You are in a secure prison here, and you shall stay for the present!"

"And may I ask," said Ruy, "what you intend doing with me?"

"Keep you here till my brother comes," was the reply. "Señor Nerle will know how to deal with you, and I propose to place you in his keeping."

Ruy made an earnest appeal to the woman's heart—pictured vividly the sufferings of his friends should he not come to their rescue; but she was adamant.

"It is useless to talk," she said, drawing from her belt a jewelled watch. "It's half-an-hour, and—ah! there's the carriage. I must go back to the palace, señor, so that I won't be connected with your disappearance, if search is ever made for you. Make up your mind to take it easy. I will come in to see you in the morning. Don't be afraid of being poisoned—Loh! keep you alive till my brother comes!"

With a low, silvery laugh, strangely like Nerle's, she closed an outer door of Ruy's prison, locked it, and tripped down to her carriage, to be in time for the best of the festivities of the palace.

And Ruy, convinced that escape was perfectly hopeless, paced to and fro, muttering:

"There will be no pirate queen to help me out of here! I must be shut up here till Nerle comes, and meanwhile Count Regla and his wife, with their whole party, will starve to death! And, oh, heaven! where is Yola?"

He groaned in the anguish of his spirit.

#### CHAPTER XXX.

##### RUY MAKES HIS WAY.

THE sensations of Ruy in his prison, as he thought of the count and Yola, and remembered how completely everything depended on him, were for a time akin to despair.

He mused in speechless anguish.

"No," he at length resumed, "pirate queens are out of the question; so is the police. I might as well expect an earthquake to burst this trapdoor. All search for me to-morrow will be fruitless. Captain Brote will not sail, and if he does he will not find the island. The count and his whole family will starve to death. No relief save that of death will reach Yola. As to me, this tigress and Nerle will make short work of me when he comes!"

His situation was indeed appalling.

It was now clear to him why Callocarras had had such wonderful success as a pirate.

The villain had spies and agents in all the principal ports, and kept himself informed of all important commercial movements, and of all efforts that were made for his capture. And the extensive range of his resources was apparent, now that he was seen to have a spy in the most fashionable society of Havana.

But, as dark as everything seemed to him, Ruy did not give way to the gloomy prospects he had enumerated. He remembered that the darkest hour frequently comes just before day, and summoned all his intelligence and resolution to his aid, looking for a way of escape.

It was certain, firstly and principally, that he must depend upon himself.

"Let me learn the nature of this den," he thought. "It's certainly a strong one—one that has been provided against this very use!"

He had been left in utter darkness, so that his sense of touch was his sole guide in this investigation, but this faculty was sufficient for his enlightenment. He speedily discovered, by groping about, that the apartment in which he was confined was not more than six or eight feet square. It was well furnished, having a little couch among its other contents. There was an indentation at one side of it, opposite the door, which appeared to have once contained a window.

"I see," he muttered. "I'm in a sort of impromptu dungeon fitted up by this dashing young widow against the arrival of such a troublesome visitor as is now in it."



He felt for his weapons, a couple of loaded pistols and a stout knife, which he had taken from one of the companions of the pretended priest at the desert island. He then tapped again upon the indentation in the wall which had suggested a former window.

"Now, was there an opening in this place or not?" he queried. "If there was, I am not so far from the outer world as I imagined."

This reasoning gave him great relief. A further investigation convinced him that there had really been a window at that side of the room, and that it had been carefully covered by planks nailed to the wall.

"Yes," he proceeded, "here are the nail-heads—immense spikes. This knife will certainly do some cutting. I ought to get out!"

He did not wait to argue the probabilities in the case but instantly set to work.

The planking was composed of hard wood peculiar to the tropics, with the edges of the different pieces dovetailed together, and the progress of Ruy in his task was both slow and painful; but he worked steadily at it for hours, until his arm ached, his hand was blistered, and the perspiration poured in streams from his forehead.

He then rested, again musing. He knew that it was now long past midnight, or about the hour when the woman was likely to return from the assemblage at the captain-general's, and he listened for her coming.

Much to his encouragement, he heard her return and bustle about awhile in the interior of the house, shutting doors, etc., and then everything became still, as if she had retired for the night.

The faintness with which these sounds came to his hearing told him that the doors between him and freedom were very thick and closely fitted. In fact, had it not been for the key-holes in them, he would have heard nothing of them.

"Yes, she has retired," he thought, after a few minutes of intense listening. "She's not a woman likely to break her rest, or to get up very early in the morning. I have a good opportunity for a further assault on the planking!"

He resumed work. Toiling with all his might, listening occasionally, thinking of his betrothed and his friends, praying inwardly for release from his prison—so Ruy passed several additional hours, and then he again paused to rest.

He knew that it must now be near the break of day, or even later.

"I have made quite a bowl in the planks," he muttered, feeling it. "Ah!"

The wood surely sprang a little under the pressure of his fingers, in the centre of the cut he had made!

"I must be getting through," he added, in a voice that was husky with emotion. "Let me see."

He wielded his knife a few moments more, and then he suddenly made a small hole in the planking, and a faint gleam of light streamed in.

How that feeble ray cheered him. It seemed a reward for all he had done and suffered!

It told him that his first hope concerning the window had not been a vain one, and that he was really near the outer world—the scene to which he was so anxious to return.

He tumbled his couch to represent its occupancy during the night, and then returned to the aperture in a fever of excited emotions. Placing his eye at the hole, he peered out into an open court, and perceived that it was long after sunrise. He was beginning to rejoice anew, when, bringing his glances up from the yard, he noticed that there was an iron bar on each side of his opening, about six inches apart; in fact, that there was a stout grating on the outside of the planking.

This discovery plunged him into the greatest distress and disappointment, it showing him that his whole night's labour was scarcely a beginning toward effecting his escape.

A servant appeared in the yard at this juncture, and commenced splitting a block of wood, as a step towards making a fire, and cooking her mistress some breakfast.

And now occurred to Ruy one of those temptations which only the harvest of souls and clearest of heads can resist.

He suddenly conceived that he could, in a few minutes, enlarge the opening in the planking sufficiently to admit of his squeezing forth through it a loud cry for help.

Surely there must be people in the neighbouring houses who would hear him and come to his rescue.

This was one side of the case. The other was not so pleasant.

The voice of prudence assured him that his call might not be immediately heard by any right-minded person—that it might not reach very far outside of the court—and that the sister of Nerle would come

with attendant ruffians at the first cry, and silence him for ever.

Again, it would be easy for madame to explain that the person calling for help was a mad relative or drunken servant, and so thwart the good intentions of any well-disposed person who might chance to be within hearing.

"The case is just this," finally mused Ruy, summing it up. "If I cry for help now, and it fails, my whole project of escape is defeated. If I wait till to-morrow, I shall then have as good a chance as now, and there is the possibility that another night of labour will clear me, without the favour of anybody."

This last reflection was decisive.

As terrible as was the temptation to instant action, he resolutely dismissed it, feeling that he could not incur such a risk until he had seen what a second night of labour would bring forth.

"I will be hopeful," he thought, after a few minutes of mental convulsion. "I will conceal what I have done, rest, and see what the day will produce."

He noticed that the hole in the planking was the first thing likely to attract attention from any one at the door, and he deftly covered it, when all was again darkness around him.

After resting a few moments, Ruy would have resumed his labours had it not been for the imminent danger of discovery that would attend such a proceeding, both from within and without the building. It was hard for him to remain motionless when he reflected upon the situation of Yola and Count Regla, but it was clear he could not work undetected by day, and he threw himself on his couch, endeavouring to become calm and quiet.

The thinness of the planking at the aperture enabled the prisoner to detect many signs of life and movement without that would not otherwise have come to his notice. He waited and waited, with the best possible patience, until near the middle of the forenoon, every instant expecting the coming of his enemy, and at last he heard some one unlocking the outer door of his prison.

Ruy had barely time enough to place himself in a position to cover his operations in the planking, when the door in question was opened, and a light flashed into the apartment through the grating in the upper part of the inner door, and Senora Panzola made her appearance, peering cautiously through the opening upon her prisoner.

"Good morning, señor!" she said, politely. "I have brought you some breakfast. Here, Costa, pass it through the grating."

At this command the servant came forward and handed the food to Ruy.

"I suppose it's poison," he said, bitterly.

"No, indeed," replied the senora. "If you are afraid to eat it, I'll taste of it myself."

She put her jewelled hand through the bars, breaking off a piece of the food, and ate it, adding:

"There, you see it is good. Why should I kill you, señor? I prefer to leave you here till my brother comes."

"Very well," returned our hero, quietly. "I should certainly prefer to live until his arrival."

He conversed with her a moment, with as much pleasantness as he could assume, having determined to learn how soon Nerle was expected. Approaching the subject in a careless and roundabout way, he finally said:

"I suppose I shall see your esteemed brother to-day?"

"No, not for several days, most likely," was the response. "At any rate, I do not immediately expect him. I tell you this that you may understand your continued confinement, and not be too impatient."

Ruy was considerably relieved by this intelligence. He talked awhile with his visitor, wondering that a woman could be so cruel and heartless, and hiding the keen emotions which raged in his heart. She finally left him to himself, and he ate his meal, then resigning himself to a day of patient waiting.

Senora Panzola came again towards night, bringing him some supper, and again had a conversation with him. His stern and fearless manner seemed to win her admiration.

When she had gone, expressing a presumption that her brother would appear in a day or two, a look of resolution took permanent possession of his face.

"This night shall see me out of here," he thought. "I think it can be done."

He waited till all was still, and then resumed work. He toiled, occasionally listening, all night, making a hole in the planking large enough to afford him egress, and cutting away part of the wood enclosing the lower ends of two of the bars. He was compelled to see, however, at the approach of day, that another night would be required to complete the task, and he was for a few moments quite gloomy and disappointed.

Suddenly an idea occurred to him.

There was an awful risk in it, but he was getting desperate.

"That servant will be in the yard again," he muttered, "and if she should see the hole in the planking and a rope of some kind hanging from it to the ground, she would raise an alarm. Moreover, when her ladyship appears here, in answer to the servant's alarm, and sees this opening with a cord attached to the bars, she'll be likely to unlock the door and rush in here, without looking for me. And then—"

He started up abruptly, inspired with the necessary faith for action, and immediately tore the sheets and blankets of his couch into strips and tied them together, thus making a stout rope. Tying one end of it to the iron bars, with huge knots, so as to make it prominent in the aperture, he thrust the other end out of the window, and permitted it to fall to the ground.

He then seated himself in a position to be behind the door of his prison, should it be opened, and waited.

He had waited till broad daylight, and till a host of anxieties were torturing him, when he heard the servant in the court.

He had no time to speculate upon what would follow, for the servant instantly perceived the cord, and supposing that the prisoner had escaped, uttered some wild cries of surprise and alarm, and hurried back into the house.

In an instant, as it seemed to Ruy, cries of rage and consternation were heard issuing from the quarters of the Senora Panzola, and he detected that she was coming.

Crouching still closer to the wall, he heard the outer door open, saw the flashing of a light, heard the panting senora as she glanced through the aperture at the hole in the wall and the rope, and then she screamed wildly:

"True enough, he's gone!"

As Ruy had hoped and almost foreseen, the terrified woman instantly unlocked the iron door, swinging it back and rushing into the apartment, precipitating herself to the aperture.

The joy of Ruy at this moment was sternly savage. He uttered a cry that had little resemblance to anything human.

Even as the senora looked through the opening in the wall, and began to realize that the bars were unbroken and unmoved, Ruy dashed from the room, closing and locking the door after him, and shouted the single word:

"Farewell!"

The servant was in the hall, blocking the way, but Ruy thrust her aside, and a few bounds took him to the entrance of the dwelling. It was locked, but a window answered every purpose, Ruy dashing through the sash and glass into the street.

He was again free!

(To be continued.)

#### THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

THE following—being some of the superstitions of the past—will doubtless cause many of our readers to smile:

**January.**—He that is born in the month of January will be laborious and a lover of good wine, be subject to fidelity, yet he will be complacent and withal a fine singer. The woman born in this month, will be prudent housewife, rather melancholy but yet good tempered.

**February.**—The man that is born in the month of February will love money much, but ladies more; he will be stingy at home, but prodigal abroad. The lady will be humane and affectionate to her mother.

**March.**—The man born in the month of March will be rather handsome; he will be honest and prudent; he will die poor. The lady will be jealous, passionate and a chatter-box.

**April.**—The man who has the misfortune to be born in the month of April will be subject to maladies; he will travel to his disadvantage, for he will marry a rich heiress, who will make—what no doubt you understand. The lady of this month will be tall and stout, with agreeable wit and great talk.

**May.**—The man born in the month of May will be handsome and amiable; he will make his wife happy. The lady will be equally blessed in every respect.

**June.**—The man born in the month of June will be of small stature and passionately fond of children. The lady will be a personage fond of coffee; she will marry young.

**July.**—The man born in the month of July will be fat, and suffer death for the wicked woman he loves. The female of this month will be passionately handsome, with a sharp nose and fine bust; she will be of rather sulky temper.

**August.**—The man born in the month of August will be ambitious and courageous; he will have two wives. The lady will be amiable and twice married,

but her second husband will cause her to regret her first.

**September.**—He who is born in the month of September will be strong and prudent, but will be too easy with his wife, who will give him great uneasiness. The lady will be round faced and fair haired, witty, discreet, and loved by her friends.

**October.**—The man born in this month will have a handsome face and florid complexion; he will be wicked and always inconsistent. He will promise one thing and do another, and remain poor. The lady will be pretty—a little fond of talking—will have two husbands who will die of grief—she will best know why.

**November.**—The man born in this month will have a fine face and be a gay deceiver. The lady of this month will be large, liberal and full of novelty.

**December.**—The man born in this month will be a good sort of a person, though passionate. He will devote himself to politics, and be beloved by his wife. The lady will be amiable and handsome, with a good voice and well proportioned body, and very honest.

### NEAFIE'S ADVENTURE.

BY COL. WALTER R. DUNLAP.

On the morning following my adventure with the panther, I found myself not quite so limber as usual. My right knee was lame, and my hip pained me considerably; and, moreover, the wound upon my shoulder was quite sore. On the whole I had been pretty thoroughly shaken up, and I concluded that I had better keep my tent for a day or two; so I spent the forenoon upon my mattress, and in the afternoon I sat down to my journal.

Harry Rusk, who sat by my side as I wrote, when I came to speak of the panther, remarked that he had always been under the impression that the true panther did not exist in India. He had seen it set down in the works of naturalists that the spotted cat, *felis pardus*, was only to be found in Africa.

I am aware that such an idea has been entertained, and that the leopard has been claimed as the only spotted feline in India; but this is a mistake. The panther is much larger and stronger than the leopard, and more ferocious; and, further, the markings of the spots are entirely different.

The spots upon the panther are formed by the clustering, into a rose-shaped circle, of many smaller spots; while the corresponding marks upon the leopard are single spots and distinct. I think that there is really no leopard in India with retractile claws. Its legs are longer in proportion to the body than are the legs of the panther, and the feet are armed with toe-nails like a dog's. The true leopard of India (the *citahela*) is easily tamed, and is extensively used for hunting the antelope, as, by its remarkable speed, it is able to run down the swiftest of the antelope tribe.

It has been said by those who are entitled to belief, that the speed of the hunting-leopard, for short distances, is superior to that of any other known animal; and I think it is so.

I saw a leopard belonging to the Rajah of Sirgoojah perform a feat which I should have been hardly willing to believe had I received it from the lips of another. We were upon the plains on the eastern confines of the district of Nerbudda, and late in the afternoon a splendid antelope broke cover and dashed away over the plain. The rajah's shikaree, as soon as he saw the game, removed the hood from his leopard, and let him go. The antelope was certainly a hundred yards distant, and perhaps more; and as I saw him speed away over the plain, it seemed as though nothing could overtake him. But the antelope was as a snail, compared with the animal that pursued him. The leopard bounded over the ground like a ricocheting ball from the mouth of a cannon, and at the distance of two hundred yards from the spot where his hood had been removed, he brought down the antelope. It will be understood, however, that there is one drawback to this marvellous speed—three or four hundred yards being the extent to which these lightning-like bounds can be sustained. Beyond that the leopard can run no faster than a common dog.

In the evening a coolie came in from the mountains towards Toree with the information that game was plentiful in that direction; and on the following morning Harry and Darley made preparations for a tramp; but I was not able to go. My hip was so lame that I could not sit in the saddle, so I chose to remain behind. The old hunter, Neafie, had business with his colonel, which prevented him from going; and hence Darley had to take the lead. Ben and Abner offered to remain with me; but I would not have it so. I preferred that they should go and try their hand with Darley.

"You'd better let me stop with you, colonel," said Ben, rather longingly.

I knew the old rascal's desire. He was lazy, and

wanted to spend the day in the shade; but I was resolved that he should not be gratified; and I directed Fitzeben to prepare his horse, and get him away. By eight o'clock they were off, and I was left alone with my boy Dan.

We were making our quarters at the bungalow of our friend Neafie, where I had a pleasant apartment, looking out upon one of the most delightful landscapes that I ever beheld. Richard Neafie was a topographical engineer, with the rank of captain; and he not only understood the art of planning fortifications, but he was equally skilful in laying out parks and gardens, as the specimens of his handiwork in that direction which I had seen abundantly proved. He was now sixty years of age; but as hale and hearty as ever, and able to hold the saddle, or wield a spear, with the best shikaree in the country.

Towards the middle of the afternoon, Neafie returned, and sought me in my chamber.

"Rather a narrow escape you had of it," he said, as he took a seat by my side.

"One of the natural events of a hunter's life," I remarked.

"Certainly," he responded. "Were it not for these adventures, one-half the charm of the shikar would be lost."

"You have slain some panthers?" I suggested.

"Many," said he.

"And you have undoubtedly had some narrow escapes."

"Yes—a few. I had one escape almost as remarkable as your own."

"Then, my dear captain, you cannot please me better than by telling me all about it."

"If you have the patience to listen, I shall be as much pleased in the telling as you will be in the hearing."

"Go ahead," said I, "and when I am tired I will let you know."

"The affair to which I have alluded," commenced Neafie, "took place three years ago, and not very far from this town. A party of us had been out hog-hunting, and in the course of the afternoon I got separated from my companions. I had given chase to a slashing old boar, and he had led me down into a deep valley where he gave me the slip by finding a thick jungle into which I could not penetrate. When I had satisfied myself that there was no such thing as uncovering the fellow, I started to retrace my steps."

"I had gone but a short distance when a jungle-sheep, which we call the bekree, broke from the bushes upon my left and dashed across my path; and in a moment more a female panther broke after her. Here was a chance for sport. If I could capture the panther I should have had my chase for something."

"I put spurs to my horse, and after a run of half a mile, or more, the panther made a short sweep and struck back toward her original cover, leaving the bekree to itself. This was a movement which I had not been looking for; but I was not slow to take advantage of it."

"Assoon as I saw the intent of the panther I turned sharp to the right and cut her off before she reached the thicket, giving her my spear in the side as I came up with her. She rolled over two or three times, and then made toward the cover again; but I was mounted upon one of the best horses that ever bore a saddle, and by the time the game was afoot I was again alongside, and another spear-thrust behind the shoulder settled her. She cried out fearfully in her death agony, and struggled hard to regain her feet, but to no effect. My spear had reached her heart, and her last hour had come."

"I was about to slip from my saddle to take the skin from my prize, when I fancied that I heard an unusual sound behind me, and on turning my head I beheld an enormous male panther just emerging from the thicket. Here, then, was the attraction which had drawn the female from her game when she found that she was pursued."

"You may be assured that I was not a great while in bringing my spear-head up for this new charge; but the panther was quicker than I was. He seemed to comprehend that I had robbed him of his mate, and his desire for revenge overcame all other considerations. With one bound he reached the back of my horse, alighting close behind my saddle, with one of his paws upon my left shoulder. On the instant that the horse felt the cruel claws, he leaped forth, and tore away down the valley with the speed of the wind. I lost my spear and came very near losing myself; but by a fortunate chance I kept my seat, and gathered the rein firmly in my hand."

"Here was a situation not to be envied. The panther—as large and powerful a one as I had ever seen—was crunched behind me, with his left fore-paw upon my shoulder; his right upon the folds of the saddle-blanket; while the claws of his hind feet, as near as I could judge, were fixed in the flesh of my horse. My prospect was by no means a pleasant one."

While my horse could keep on the top of his speed the panther might remain where he was. He was evidently not used to horseback riding, and at that speed he had as much as he could do to keep his place. But what would be the result when my horse's strength failed? He could not keep on at that rate a great while. I had already tried him pretty severely, after the boar, and after the female panther; and I knew that only his extreme terror, and the pain from those sharp claws, gave him this impetus.

"At a distance of two miles we entered a narrow ghat, and beyond this we came out upon an open plain. Three miles further on was a deep river; and it struck me that, if we could reach the stream, I might, by dashing into it, rid myself of my terrible enemy. But the chance was a dubious one. My horse could never reach it. Already his strength was failing him, and I could feel that his wind was going. When he did go, he would go all of a sudden, and, very likely, all in a heap; and then, of course, the panther would come out at the top."

"There was one other unpleasant circumstance attending that ride—one which had begun to tell upon my strength and fortitude: the claws of the panther's left foot were buried in my shoulder, and perhaps you can imagine that they gave me some pain. I declare it makes me writhe, even now; and often am I startled out from a sound sleep by the dreaming fancy that those claws are again plunging into my shoulder. I could feel them grind upon the bone, and I knew not how soon they might tear down across my back."

"I had with me for weapons, a pair of good pistols in my holsters; my sword, and my hunting-knife; and as I found my horse failing I began to think of these. But how could I use them? The sword of course I could not use; and as for the knife, I dared not trust myself to try, for I knew that I was weak—I had been losing blood from my shoulder. If I was to use anything before my horse fell, it must be one of the pistols."

"I passed the rein into my left hand, and drew a pistol from the holster. It was a heavy trooper's pistol, carrying a large ball, and I knew that it was carefully loaded. I had just grasped it and drawn it forth when I felt my horse quiver and collapse, as though his lungs had failed him. I had not a moment to lose. My noble animal had fairly done breathing, and his present impetus was involuntary. I knew that in a very few seconds he must go."

"During all this time I had felt the hot breath of the panther upon my neck, his terrible fangs not more than six inches from the current of life that went pouring through those large veins which he would be sure first to strike when his opportunity should come. If I were to shoot him as he now lay, his head was the only spot I could reach; and even that was not easy, for I could not turn in my saddle, and I dared not look back."

"I had but one hope—one blind chance, and I resolved to try it. I cocked the pistol, and turning it in my hand, with my thumb upon the trigger, I poked it over my right shoulder. The panther growled, and presently he snapped up the weapon. On the instant that I felt his teeth touch the barrel, I fired. There was a terrible crashing in my right ear, and I felt my hair scorching; but something else felt it more than I did."

"With a yell that completely drowned the reverberations of the report of the pistol the panther leaped backward, tearing the flesh of my shoulder, and taking away the whole back of my jacket; and in a moment more my horse stopped, and staggered, and fell to the earth. I was very weak; but I managed to clear my feet from the stirrups as the horse went down, and my first idea, after thus freeing myself, was to look after the panther. I saw him upon the ground, not many yards distant, struggling furiously. I was sure that the bullet had gone through his brain. It was a wonderful shot; but the blind chance had favoured me. As the beast snapped at the muzzle of my pistol he must have thrown his head back, so that the ball passed upward through the roof of the mouth."

"When I saw that the panther was done for, I sat down and thought to fix the wound upon my shoulder. I had torn away the fragments of the shirt, and was thinking what I should use for a bandage, when I began to feel faint and sick. Presently my sight failed me, and I swooned entirely away."

"When I came to myself I was in my own house, and the surgeons were by my bedside. My companions had found the body of the female panther which I had slain with my spear, and from that point they had followed the track of my horse until they found me. For some time they thought I was dead; but when they discovered that my breast remained warm, they dressed my wound as best they could and brought me home with all speed."

"By that adventure I won two fine panther skins; but I lost my horse, and also lost two months' time, during which I was laid up by the injuries I had received."





[MISS BERKELEY DISCONCERTS SOMERTON.]

## THE FATAL SECRET.

## CHAPTER XIII.

All earthly good still blends itself with harm;  
Roses have thorns, a storm succeeds a calm;  
Joys have their sorrows, laughter has its tears;  
Sweetness have their bitter drops, and hopes their fears.

ANON.

DURING their ride the party from Fountains encountered Fanny Berkeley, mounted on Dashaway, and attended by her groom. She had not yet heard of the arrival of the heiress, and she checked the speed of her horse and rode forward quite demurely for her.

"Good morning, Mr. Fontaine; it is something quite wonderful to see you a squire of dames. I was coming to Isola to be consoled, for George is actually gone; and everybody at home insists that for me it is the very worst thing that could have happened."

"You have lost a brother and I have gained a niece, Fanny," said Fontaine, with his rare smile. "Permit me to present her to you, and I trust that Savella Fontaine and Fanny Berkeley will be good friends in the future."

The two girls nodded and smiled at each other, and Fontaine said:

"We will now return, as Savella has ridden quite far enough for a first essay on horseback. We will detain you with us for the day, and send back a message to that effect."

"Oh no, thank you. I promised cousin Carrie to return before dinner. I left Philip Vane at the Vale for her to entertain, while I scamped off to see Isola, for I have a very important communication to make to her."

At Philip's name Fontaine's face darkened, and he said, curtly:

"Young ladies' secrets are usually very important, in their own estimation at least. If Mr. Vane is your guest, I fancy Miss Carleton can play the agreeable to him quite as well as you can."

"Oh! she can do it a great deal better, for I do not presume to place myself in competition with cousin Carrie. She is a queen, and I am only fit to be her maid of honour."

"I did not give you credit for so much humility as that. Ride on with Isola, and we will follow more slowly, for Savella is yet a little afraid of her horse."

"Afraid of dainty Selim? Oh, you needn't be, Miss Fontaine, for he is the most thoroughbred horse in the county, and by that I mean that he is too well bred

to attempt anything to alarm you. Isola rode him in her school-days, and he is as obedient to her voice as if he possessed reason. Come, Isola, let us canter forward."

The two were soon out of sight, and Savella made innumerable inquiries as to the family and fortune of her new acquaintance. When she learned that herself and her brother were the presumptive heirs of a large estate in the neighbourhood, she felt a little vexed that George had made his exodus before she had an opportunity of seeing him, for Savella had made up her mind that one endowed with the brilliant fortune she came to claim was entitled to the homage of every presentable man that approached her. She asked:

"Who is this Philip Vane of whom Miss Berkeley spoke?"

With some constraint Fontaine replied:

"He is the son of a neighbour, and has been partially educated with the young Berkeleys and Isola."

"Is he handsome? Is his father wealthy?"

"As to the last I cannot say; but the Vanes live in handsome style, and Dunlora is one of the most desirable places in the valley as a residence for a man of ample means. As to Philip's appearance, I will leave you to judge of that when you see him. But I must warn you of one thing, Savella; I have reason to know that when Philip Vane marries he will not make a disinterested choice. If he should attempt to approach you in the character of a wooer, remember that you must not calculate on gaining my approval."

"Thank you for the warning, Uncle Claude, and be sure that I will remember it," she said, with seeming earnestness. "You shall guide my choice if I ever make one, for a young girl who is a stranger to all around her might easily fall into the snare of a mere fortune-hunter."

"Only abide by that determination, Savella—consult me in everything in which you are vitally interested, and you will be saved from many a danger. I am your best friend, remember; yes—your best one, for neither your aunt nor Mr. Somerton can have the same interest in your future which I have. You are a sacred bequest to me from a brother I fondly loved, whose fate I shall never cease to deplore; and to make you a good and thoughtful woman is my most earnest desire. Providence has delegated to you a great responsibility, and as you use or abuse it you will hereafter be judged."

"Oh, uncle, you frighten me by such solemn words. Though Mr. Somerton is a clergyman, he has never said as much to me as that."

"Because few people think as I do on this subject. To eat, drink and be merry is by most persons con-

sidered as the legitimate use of a large fortune; but I regard the possessor of wealth as a steward who will be as severely judged for its misuse as the man who buried his one talent without attempting to use it."

Savella impulsively exclaimed:

"My dear uncle, you are the best man I have ever seen. I will try and do as you wish, and although I may sometimes disappoint you through heedlessness, and sometimes through wilfulness, yet I have not a bad heart, and I will at least make an effort to come up to the standard you wish me to attain."

Fontaine was pleased with this speech, for he saw that it was a genuine expression of feeling, and as they rode slowly forward he sought to draw her out and become more familiar with the spirit that inhabited a form so closely resembling what his persecutor once was.

But for that he could have taken Savella to his heart in perfect trust as all that remained to him of his long-lost brother.

The young girl, mindful of the cue which had been given her, prattled on gaily, and with apparent artlessness. With a quick appreciation of character, she intuitively knew what would please the fastidious and reserved man beside her, and when they arrived at his own door, Fontaine had arrived at the agreeable conviction that the fine nature of his niece had been unswayed by the teachings of her subtle protectress, and she would yet be a comfort and pride to his declining years.

In the meantime Isola and Fanny had gained Fountains, and retired to the chamber of the latter. When they were alone, Fanny said:

"So the long-expected have come at last. The girl is only passable; what are the others like? You see that I have assumed the character of your confessor, Isola, and I expect you to speak out exactly what you think. Do you like these people?"

"Really, Fanny, you ask so many questions in a breath that I hardly know how to answer you. I can have formed no accurate judgment of our guests yet."

"I understand exactly what that means. I see they are not to your taste, but there is a cloud on your brow already. But I'll tell you one thing: if these strangers make you uncomfortable in your own home, I shall take you to cure! There! you need not say a word; I shall do it: and grandpa told me this morning that if anything should happen here to make you desire another home, his should always be open to you."

"My dear Fanny, what can you possibly have said to General Berkeley to draw forth such an assurance? I can rely on my father's affection to sustain me under

every trial, and I will never—never forsake him. But I am not the less grateful to your grandfather for his kindness, though I trust that I shall never need to put it to the test."

"Perhaps not; but Mr. Fontaine is not your own father, remember, and no one knows what may happen. Until lately, had you not as much faith in one who has proved—I won't say what?"

The heart of Isola painfully contracted, but she quietly said:

"This is a very different thing: I cannot compare my just and noble father to him to whom you refer. He has proved recreant, and I have given him up."

"Finally and for ever, Isola? Is there no lingering feeling of interest for him in your heart? I am a cruel, dear Isola; but I am only kind, for I have a motive so weighty for asking the question as to relieve me from the charge of impertinence."

"I no longer love Philip Vane," firmly replied Isola. "I believe now that I was only fascinated by his beauty and wit; for since the conviction came to me that he cared more for the fortune with which I supposed I should be endowed than for myself, I have found it easy to relinquish him. I hope you are satisfied now, Fanny?"

"Yes, you darling girl, I am satisfied with this candid avowal; and, what is more, somebody else will be happy when I tell him this. Here is a letter I have brought you. There—don't attempt to read it now; for I claim every moment of your time while I am here, and that can wait. I left it over our house talking over the 'affair,' as he calls it, with my cousin. He has lost ground in his favour, I can tell you; but the best of it is, Philip professes to adore you still, but in the same breath he says that he cannot defy the wishes of his parents so far as to marry you. I am sure that he does like you, next to himself, but I know that if his imperial highness said 'I will,' to that poor old father of his, he would carry the day. Send Mr. Vane to Coventry, dear, for he needs no better fate."

"I fancy it is now of little importance to him whether I send him," replied Isola, with an attempt to smile. "This letter, I see, is from George. I will do as you bid me, and lay it aside till I am alone. I do hope he will enjoy his travels, and come back to us improved in every way."

"I expect he'll become such a grand seigneur that he will hardly deign to look at poor little me; but I'll have my turn. I am going to town this winter, and I'll find a lover willing to take me on a bridal tour; mind if I don't."

"Let me be your *compagnon de voyage*, Fanny, when once this grand match is secured," said Isola, laughing with something like her former animation.

"Of course I will. By that time you will be sick enough of these new people, for I have a presentiment that they have come here to put you out in the cold. In spite of the ominous warning: 'Judge not lest ye be judged,' I am going to sit in judgment upon them. There is the bell for lunch now, and I must see if I am presentable."

Fanny flew to the glass, smoothed her brown curls, and arranged her collar, while Isola placed George's letter in her work-box and locked it. In a few moments the two were ready to descend, and in the lower hall they overtook Senora Roselli and Somerton.

Miss Berkeley was presented to them, and the trio entered the dining-room, to find Fontaine and Savella already seated at the table. Fanny laughed and chatted with her usual vivacity, but she was covertly watching the strangers and drawing her own conclusions. The soft and insinuating manner assumed by Somerton did not please her honest nature; Senora Roselli positively repelled her; she made up her mind that Savella might be tolerated; but as the heiress of the Fontaines she was a poor representative of their stately beauty and refined courtesy.

In spite of Savella's promise to her uncle, she could not repress a sarcastic smile when Fanny spoke to Giles when he offered her something from the table.

"How do you do, Giles? I hope Aggy is well?"

"So, so, Miss Fanny. My wife begins to feel that she is not so sprightly as she once was. You look bright as this roses yourself this morning."

"Thank you for the compliment. You are always gallant enough to remember that I like to be flattered."

"Flattery! from such a source!" muttered Senora Roselli under her breath; but Somerton blandly said:

"This kindly feeling is really charming, Miss Berkeley. You have given me a new lesson in politeness."

"I never thought of being polite," said Fanny, honestly. "I only expressed the kind feeling I have for an old friend I have known from infancy. Giles has brought me many a childish treasure which I yet remember with pleasure."

The old man's face beamed with delight, and he afterwards privately informed Aggy:

"That Miss Fanny put down that foreign man in

her off-hand way, and gave him a lesson he won't forget soon."

Fontaine seemed more animated than usual. He exerted himself to talk, and Fanny noticed that his manner to his niece was tender and deferential. She augured from this that he was satisfied with Savella, though she could herself see very little reason why he should be so.

Then she chided herself for so harshly judging one so little known to her; and after lunch was over, she endeavoured to atone for it by her attentions to the ladies.

When her horse was brought round to her for her return home, she said to Savella:

"This unceremonious visit was not intended as a call on you, Miss Fontaine, for I was not aware of your arrival till I met you on the road. To-morrow the Berkeley family will appear in state in welcome yourself and your aunt to our 'happy valley.' We who dwell in it think it only inferior to the Garden of Eden."

"Into that a serpent intruded," said Somerton, in his sarcastic tones. "Pray, Miss Berkeley, choose a better comparison: the *Val de Tempe*, or the *Happy Valley of Rasselas*, would be more appropriate."

"I prefer my own," said Fanny, "for God guarded over it, and He sent the angel with the flaming sword to exclude vengeance upon the faithless and presumptuous, as he will ever do."

She regarded him steadily as she uttered the words, and Somerton shrank before the glance.

Had this mere girl instinctively detected the evil within him, that she should venture to speak thus? He recovered himself, and, with resumed sanctity, said:

"Excuse me, Miss Berkeley, but such comparisons appear to me to profane Scriptures too sacred to be applied to common things."

Fanny's lip curled slightly, but she said:

"Pardon me if I have wounded your prejudices in any way. I had no intention of being irreverent."

"Perhaps I am too easily touched on this subject," replied Somerton, placing his hands admonitionally upon his breast, "but I have been reared in a rigid school. Pardon me, in my turn, Miss Berkeley, for presuming to speak thus to one so much a stranger to me."

"We forgive any degree of asceticism to one of your cloth, Mr. Somerton, so we will part good friends. My father and grandfather will be glad to make the acquaintance of a gentleman of your learning and piety, and they will doubtless call very soon."

Her adieu ended, Fanny whispered to Isola: "Now you may read your letter and ponder over its contents. I shall carry home a faithful report of all I have seen, thought and felt within the last hour."

Fontaine placed her on her horse, and sent an invitation to the family at the Vale to come over without ceremony and spend the following day at Fontaine. She promised to accompany them, and dashed away at her usual pace, impatient to reach home and impart her first impressions of her new acquaintances to Miss Carleton. She found her with Mrs. Berkeley in the sitting-room, into which Fanny rushed in a state of great excitement, exclaiming:

"I have seen them! They are all come, and the heiress is nothing very great, after all."

"So, the long-looked-for have arrived at last," said Mrs. Berkeley. "Sit down, Fanny, and give us your first impressions of our new neighbours. Your shrewd observation has doubtless furnished you with a pretty accurate idea of their characters."

"I am afraid you will think me uncharitable, grandma; and Cousin Carrie will look up in her grave fashion when she is displeased, and call my name in her deepest tragic tone; but I must say my say, even if I am naughty."

Miss Carleton smiled on her; her face had lost some of its girlish beauty in the years which have passed since we last saw her, but it had gained much more in mobility of expression, in the refinement which reveals the earnest soul animated by a gentle and benevolent temper; she said:

"Speak out, Fanny; I am deeply interested in these strangers, both on Isola's account and on Mr. Fontaine's. I hope they will bring no discord into his house."

Fanny gravely shook her head.

"I am afraid they will. Senora Roselli is a hard woman of the world, I should say, who will not let feeling or politeness prevent her from doing or saying what seems good to her. Mr. Somerton pretends to be very devout, but I am ashamed to say that I have an impression that he is a wolf in sheep's clothing; though Mr. Fontaine spoke highly of his kindness to his niece, and told me that he would remain in his family as her tutor. Savella, it seems, is ambitious of becoming a learned lady, for she intends to continue

the study of the dead languages and mathematics with him."

"You do not judge the elder members of the party leniently, my dear; but what of Miss Fontaine herself? Does she resemble her father's family?"

"No, ma'am; she is what Phoebe would call the 'very moral' of her aunt. In her youth, I can fancy that Senora Roselli looked exactly as Savella Fontaine does now. She is dark, with little colour. Her hair and eyes are black, and the heat in the intensity of their hue, reminds me of those of my old wax doll, though they had not quite so staring an expression. Her manner is caressing, and I fancy she has already made a favourable impression on Mr. Fontaine."

"I am glad to hear that," said Berkeley. "Claude is a fastidious man, and if he approves her, Savella must be worthy to be received among us, even if she is not as attractive as the women of his family have been considered."

"You can judge for yourself, ma'am, for Mr. Fontaine charged me with an invitation for the whole family to spend to-morrow at his house. I think he will feel delighted if we do not all go."

"We seldom decline an invitation to Fontaine," said Mrs. Berkeley, "and on this occasion it must certainly be accepted. I own that I am impatient to see the heiress, and judge for myself of her fitness for the position she is to assume. How does Isola seem affected by their arrival?"

"Isola would not be drawn into discussing them, though I tried to draw her out; but I am afraid she begins already to realize that their presence will not add to her happiness."

"Poor child! it is a great change for her, and if Philip Vane reports truly what passed between Claude and himself, I am afraid that he will be unable to provide for her, though he declares his intention to do so."

"Philip Vane is a false and mercenary man," said Fanny, indignantly; "I expect to see him bowing before this golden idol at the first opportunity; but I do hope that Mr. Fontaine will deal with his pretensions as summarily as they deserve. I have given up nearly all my old liking for Phil, and I don't intend to play the hypocrite toward him. He shall see what I think of his conduct in this affair."

"My dear Fanny," said the clear voice of Miss Carleton, "do not judge poor Philip too harshly. Some respect was due to his parents, and I know that they would bitterly have opposed his marriage with a fortuneless girl. I do not defend their mercenary ideas, but their son was bound to pay some attention to them."

"Cousin Carrie, you are always finding excuses for those that are in fault; but I know that Philip rules his parents, and he could have extorted their consent to his marriage with Isola if he had chosen to do so. But the young gentleman thinks his pretty person too valuable to be thrown away on Venus herself if she had not a cistus of gold. Don't tell me about Philip Vane, for I have no patience with him."

"What are you saying about me?" asked Philip, coming in from the hall, looking radiantly handsome. "I hope you are not in one of your tantrums with me, Fanny. What have I done to arouse your indignation?"

"If your own heart does not tell you, I shall not take the trouble to enlighten you," replied the young girl, with a toss of her head. "But I have news for you that you will be glad to hear: the heiress has come, and I have seen her."

"Indeed!" he said, with cool indifference. "I do not know that I am particularly interested in the advent of this young lady, especially as under present circumstances I cannot visit Fontaine."

"Do you not really intend to call on her?"

"I fancy not—it would be painful to me to see—No, I shall visit at Fontaine no more."

There was a tone of feeling in his voice that partially disarmed Fanny, and she began to think that, after all, he might regret his separation from Isola more than she had thought. She more gently said:

"I am sorry for you, Philip, for you have relinquished the fairest prospect of happiness that any man could have hoped for."

"Do you think I would have given her up, Fanny, if I could by any means have avoided it? I am the victim of circumstances, and it is out of my power to explain to you why I have been compelled to act as I have done. In your heart you brand me as a mercenary wretch; but I know that I am something better than that. Mr. Fontaine dismissed me almost with contempt, and Isola passively acquiesced in his decision. I resent the treatment of both too deeply to present myself as a visitor at Fontaine. I really think you might at least be kinder to an old friend."

"I will try to be so, Phil, so let us say no more on this painful subject."

He drew her aside and asked:

"How does Isola look? Has she suffered from—"



"From losing the light of your beauty and the sparkle of your wit?" asked Fanny, in a mocking tone, which she could not control. "Not in the least, Mr. Vane; Isola looks as handsome and seems in as good spirits as usual. She told me with her own lips that all is at an end between you, and moreover she said she believed she was more fascinated by your external advantages than attached to your noble qualities. So you see that on both sides it has been 'Love's labour lost.'"

Philip fairly gnashed his teeth, and the pale shade of anger that swept over his face his tormentor might have attributed to some deeper feeling; but Fanny's intuition taught her that Philip was only a consummate actor, and her hard heart did not again relent toward him.

He spoke, in a constrained tone:

"It is well for me to know this, for my course is now plain before me."

"I am glad to hear it, for nothing is so comfortable as a decided course of action. Isola will not pine in green and yellow melancholy, and you may understand that you are quite free to seek something yellow that is more substantial than the first fancy of a young girl."

She flitted away at the summons of her mother, leaving Philip to glower through the window beside which they had been standing, with rage and mortification swelling at his heart. He muttered:

"They all see through my shallow pretences, and despise me as I deserve; but I will come out winner yet. Indifferent as Isola may profess to be, she shall yet feel my desertion. I am not to be thus taunted with impunity."

The sound of the dinner-bell interrupted his bitter musings, and over the table no wit was so bright, no spirits apparently so gay as those of Philip Vane.

In the evening his father and mother came over to the Vale, and Mr. Vane, in a long conversation with General Berkeley, took on himself the entire blame of his son's conduct; he protested that Philip would have married Isola at all hazards, but himself and his wife used all their power over him to break off a match with a portionless girl, whose family was entirely unknown to them; besides, Philip was dependent upon his parents, and he had no other resource but to submit.

General Berkeley listened politely, but at the close of the conversation he said:

"Of course you understand your own position and wishes best, Mr. Vane; but if my grandson had been the fortunate pretender to Isola's favour, I should have received her with the certainty that so gentle and lovely a being is worthy to be mated with the best, however obscure her origin may prove to be. Neither do I think it likely that we shall ever know to whom she really belongs."

"That may be true enough, general; but I have my prejudices, though I do not deny that I might have overlooked them if she had really been the heiress to the Fontaine estate."

"I thought that your pet theory enabled you to overlook even the difference in races," General Berkeley rather maliciously remarked.

"That is merely speculative, sir; merely speculative; but in the matter of family descent it is quite different."

"The best blood is that which produces the finest specimens of the human race; judged by that standard, Mr. Vane, this young girl is a princess in her own right."

"Perhaps so; I will not dispute it; but even a princess without a dowry is a forlorn match for a man who has nothing he can call his own. My law-suit hangs in the balance, and if it goes against me we shall have nothing but Danvers, and you know how inadequate that is to the maintenance of the luxury to which we are accustomed."

General Berkeley had never heard of the suit till within the last few days; but under this new aspect of affairs, he prudently thought that it might be as well for Philip to pay some attention to the wishes of his father.

#### CHAPTER XIV

An evil soul producing holy wisdom.  
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek—  
A goodly apple rotten at the heart.  
*Shakespeare.*

WHEN Isola again found herself alone in her own room, she unlocked her work-box, and took from it the letter given to her by Fanny.

With much emotion she read the following lines:

"DEAREST ISOLA,—I cannot leave my native land for an indefinite time without saying to you what would have remained unsaid but for the recent change in your destiny."

"I know that Philip Vane has withdrawn his pretensions to your favour, for I had the assurance from himself; and I am not invading any right of one who

has been my friend from boyhood in thus addressing you."

"Isola, you have long known that I love you, but how truly, how tenderly, you will never know unless fate gives me the privilege to call you mine at some future day. I can wait; I can hope, without asking any pledge from you. Just now I feel how ungenerous it would be to plead for such a thing; but love such as mine can await the revolution in your heart which time may produce in my favour."

"I tell you this now that you may compare other pretenders to your affections with your early adorer, whose devotion will never fail you under any circumstances while life is left to him."

"With the entire approbation of my family, I reveal to you the unalterable sentiments of my heart, and I will hope that in time yours will be moved to respond to them. I love you for yourself alone, Isola, and no change in your prospects can affect my feelings. A stranger is coming to claim the inheritance we have all believed would be yours, and if she makes your home unpleasant to you, I entreat that you will seek shelter and protection from those who have loved you from your childhood. Should it be necessary, I believe that Mr. Fontaine will consent to this arrangement, for your happiness has for years been his first care."

"My cousin Carrie has promised to stand your fast friend in every crisis that may arise, and I have such confidence in her goodness—in her sense of right—that I am willing to trust you to her guidance. I need not tell you to rely on her as a firm friend, for that she is such to you you already know."

"I will write to you only friendly letters, Isola, for I will not persecute you with my love. Reply to them as a friend, if you can find in your heart a feeling of preference for me. If you cannot, leave them unanswered; for, although the pang will be severe, it will be best to cherish no false hope of success if I am ultimately to fail in winning the light of my eyes, and the desire of my heart."

"I shall be absent two years, and in that time you can learn to understand your own feelings; but be assured mine will never waver in their devotion to you. Adieu, my precious friend, and may God and his holy angels guard you from all evil."

"GEORGE BERKELEY."

Isola read this letter over several times, and she wiped away her falling tears before placing it in her writing-desk. After her late bitter experience, this disinterested devotion was very sweet to her; and with a sigh she wished she had been more clear-sighted in judging of the merits of her two lovers. But just now the very thought of love was odious to her; a few months hence she might feel differently; she might be able to respond to this noble and generous suitor in such a manner as would satisfy him that his cause was not hopeless.

Isola knew that the desire nearest to her guardian's heart would be fulfilled if she accepted George Berkeley as her future husband, but that was something so far distant that she need not trouble herself about it just now. Several months must elapse before she could hear from him, and in the interim she could decide whether she could conscientiously give him the tacit encouragement he asked.

Accustomed always to confide in Fontaine, she sought him in his library, and laid before him the letter which had so deeply moved her. He read it with evident gratification, and on closing it exclaimed:

"Noble, generous fellow! How different from Philip Vane. My dear child, this mainly letter only confirms the high opinion I have always had of George. If you ever marry, I hope he will be the man you will prefer above all others. Is not your heart touched by his tender care for your happiness, Isola?"

"I do not know," she wearily replied. "I am grateful for his high appreciation, especially at this time; but my heart seems to have contracted and grown harder with the experience of the last few weeks. I do not know that I shall be worthy to accept the affection poor George so lavishly offers, in that distant time to which he refers."

Fontaine drew her toward himself, and looked tenderly into her drooping eyes; he regretfully asked:

"Has the arrow struck so deep, my love? Must your young life be permanently shadowed by the heartless Adonis who cast you aside so soon as he comprehended that you could not endow him with great wealth? My beloved child, I conjure you to be true to yourself, and let the lofty scorn of a noble nature crush out the last vestige of your preference for Philip Vane."

He felt her tremble in his clasp, but she no longer avoided his eyes. She looked up firmly, as she replied:

"It has already done so, father. I no longer love Philip, but there is a dreary void—a blank feeling of desolation in my heart; that oppresses me almost unto death. I am yet in the depths of the valley of humiliation, but God, to whom I earnestly pray, will in

His own good time lead me out of it. After this penance is completed, if I feel that I am worthy to accept the love of a true and honourable man, I will not refuse poor George's prayer. I will then write to him, and in the interval of his absence I will endeavour to become a better and truer woman for his sake; for such love as his merits a rich reward."

A joyful smile irradiated Fontaine's face at this assurance, and he tenderly said:

"Persevere in the course you have marked out for yourself, my dear child, and the blessing of heaven will ultimately fall on you. To see you happy is the most cherished desire of my heart, and I will have faith to believe that the God who cast you on my protection will yet enable me to provide for your future welfare. I have commenced looking into my affairs, and if life is spared me, I hope in a few years to make you no contemptible heiress yet. I am better off than I thought I was, but I am glad that what has happened here has enabled you so clearly to distinguish between the true metal and the false."

"You are too good," she replied, with emotion. "You think only of me, and I have lately suffered my thoughts to dwell so much on another. But I am disenchanted, and I promise you that right reason shall soon resume its sway."

"That is right, my darling; there is much latent strength in your soul that has never yet been tested. You will emerge from this trial with as tender a heart, as gentle and true a nature, as before it fell upon you. When you feel as if you can conscientiously do so, answer poor George's letter, and give him a gleam of hope."

She smiled faintly:

"When I can do so, I will, dear father. Now I will interrupt you no longer."

In the warm summer weather the doors were all open, and as Isola turned to leave the library, she thought she heard a movement in the outer room; she stepped quickly forward, but was not in time to detect the eavesdropper, who was no other than Senora Roselli. She had seen Isola going to her guardian, carrying an open letter in her hand, and an irresistible desire to learn what that letter referred to seized on her. She softly glided through the outer apartment, and stood near enough to the door to overhear every word that passed within.

She made good her escape, and when Isola came into the hall she found her seated in a large chair, apparently absorbed in a book she had snatched from a table as she passed. As the young girl approached her, she started very naturally, and looking up, said:

"Oh! it's you! I was really so absorbed in this charming book that I had quite forgotten everything around me. Mr. Fontaine has a good library, I believe, I should like very much to look over its shelves, for I am a great reader."

My father will not object to your doing so, madam; but he usually sits in that room, and he would prefer that your visit should be made when he goes out for his daily walk; and in his absence, I will go in with you at any time."

"He does not like to be disturbed, then? Mr. Fontaine seems very solitary in his habits."

"Yet among his friends he is very social, as you may already have observed. He is fond of study, and sometimes, for days, he confines himself to that apartment. At such times, I do not even apply for admittance."

"I wonder if he is seeking after the philosopher's stone," said the senora, with a constrained laugh.

"I should not wonder, for Claude was always a fanciful man."

"I am certain that he is too practical a man to seek anything that would be so useless to him," responded Isola drily. "Mr. Fontaine is satisfied to be a faithful steward in the use of the wealth Providence has bestowed on him, without seeking such means as you hint at to increase it."

"Yet it would be a grand thing to discover. Think of the immense good such a man might do with the wealth which would then be his!"

"My father has no desire to become a second Midas, madam. I have reason to believe that his time is spent in mere ennobling studies than seeking to increase the fortune which is already amply sufficient for all reasonable purposes."

"You speak of your protector as if he were almost a god," said the senora, with a repressed sneer.

"There is but one God," said the young girl, reverently, "and even in thought, I dare not liken any human creature to him; but among men, my father has few peers. I have every cause to estimate him highly, for to me he has been the best and most generous of benefactors."

"And you do not even know your own name? Do not know to what nation you belong?" said the hard woman, caring little if she wounded the sensitive creature she despised, and was resolute to trample on.

"I bear the name of him who adopted me as his child, and I claim to be Italian by education and

birth," replied Isola, with dignity, for she felt that the speaker was impudently endeavouring to wound her. She passed on and joined Savella on the lawn.

After looking out on the beautiful scene bathed in the early sunshine, she turned to the heiress, and said:

"I have not yet heard you play or sing, Savella. Since you are from the land of song, you should excel in music."

"You shall judge for yourself," and the two passed into the drawing-room. The piano was a fine-toned one, and kept in excellent order. Isola played well and sang sweetly herself; but when Savella ran her fingers over the keys, and executed a prelude of great brilliancy, she at once confessed to herself that she had never heard so skilful a touch before.

Savella played some difficult Italian variations and then struck into a wild German air, possessing all the weird power of their wonderful music. Attracted by the magic of the sounds, Fontaine came from his room, and sat down near her, charmed and entranced. As the last note died away, the performer arose and said:

"That will do for the present. Now, you must play for me, Isola."

As she turned, her eye fell on Fontaine, and she exclaimed:

"You here, Uncle Claude! That is indeed a compliment to my poor skill!"

"Do not undervalue your great gift, Savella, for such playing I have rarely heard, and I am no mean judge. You sing, too? With such a musical organization, a fine voice must have been given."

"Yes, I can sing, too," she smilingly replied, "and I shall be very happy if my performance can give you pleasure."

"Music is a passion with me, and such as yours might delight one even less enthusiastic than myself. Let me hear your voice, my dear."

Savella resumed her seat, and commenced a wild and passionate wail from "Norma." For an instant Fontaine regretted the choice she had made, for he had heard that opera performed in Naples by the finest Continental musicians, and he feared an amateur would fail to render isolated portions of it with all their heart-rendering pathos. But after the first line he listened in breathless amazement; the rich and flexible voice of the singer deepened to the lowest wail of anguish, or soared to the highest note of despair, without breaking or losing a single inflexion of the magnificent music. Fontaine almost held his breath to listen, and at the close of the performance he seized her hand and warmly said:

"My dear Savella, you have afforded me more pleasure than I have known for years. Your voice and execution are wonderful; you would make a successful prima donna."

"Go, Mr. Somerton once thought; and by his advice I have received the best musical instruction afforded by my native land; and you know that is saying much. If I had failed to discover the residence of my family, I should have gone on the operatic stage."

"Thank heaven that you were saved from that!" said Fontaine, emphatically. "Yet with your powers, it was a wise forethought in him. Sing to me, Savella, when I am sad, and you will always have the power to drive the demon from me, as David did from Saul."

"Oh, uncle! how glad I am that I can do something to make you happier!" she exclaimed with animation. "This is my sole talent; but I shall estimate it more highly than any other since you so generously appreciate it."

Fontaine kissed her brow and smilingly said: "I appreciate both that and yourself very highly, I assure you. Sing on—let me hear you in something less sad than poor Norma's broken-hearted wail."

Savella willingly complied, and for an hour the two listeners sat rapt in the melody that filled them with delight.

During this time Senora Roselli joined Somerton, and walked on the lawn with him. She said with a sneer:

"Savella's music has produced the effect I anticipated. I counselled her not to play till she was asked to do so, that they might be more surprised at her performance than if she had volunteered it. I never heard her sing better."

"I don't know, after all, but it would have been better to let her take her chance on the stage than to bring her here to claim this inheritance. She must have made a brilliant fortune."

"Perhaps so; but it was uncertain, and she is difficult to manage. Flattery and the incense of public applause would soon have turned her head, which we both know is none of the strongest. She would have escaped from our control, and probably married some worthless man, who would have taken from us the reward of all our efforts. This was our surest card, and to play it with success must now be our sole object."

"So you have always contended, and I yielded to your opinion. Time will show which was right. We can secure what we are now working for, and Savella may yet carry out her destiny by becoming world-renowned as a singer."

"Perhaps so; but the future must decide. I have made a discovery which is important to us, and I have sought the earliest opportunity of communicating it to you. I saw that girl going in with a letter to Claude: I noiselessly followed her, and listened to all that passed between them. It was a love letter from young Berkeley, I suppose, from what they said. They spoke of a disappointment connected with Philip Vane, who, it seems, has also been making love to her until he discovered that she would not be an heiress. But what concerns us is that Fontaine told her, if he lives long enough, he will make her rich yet. She shall never have a penny from this estate; every pound he has shall be given to Savella; on that I am determined."

"Not more firmly than I am," said Somerton. "But you have in your possession the means of circumventing him. If you do your part, the girl will never live to enjoy his savings. What use have you made of the powder I gave you?"

"It is here," she replied, placing her hand on the pocket of her dress. "Are you quite sure that it will impart no taste to water?"

"If you put in the minute quantity I indicated it will not be perceived. Your own safety depends on that, for her fading away must be too gradual to excite suspicion, and the sentimental disappointment to which you alluded will readily account for the failure of her health."

"I understand all that," was the impatient response. "Now I can see my way clear enough. A small pitcher stands on a table near her bed, which I daily fill with cold water every night. I can easily find my way there before she retires, and—"

She did not complete the sentence, but the hard compression of her cruel lips spoke more eloquently than words.

"Poor Berkeley," said Somerton, with a shilling laugh. "I am afraid he is destined to a second disappointment, even more grievous than the first. Who is this Vane?"

"The son of a neighbouring resident in the valley, and it seems that both the young men made love to Isola. One was in earnest, but the other shied off with the change in her prospects, as I before told you."

"I shouldn't wonder if this Vane should be trying to snatch our quarry from us. Savella must be warned that he is only a fortune-hunter, for if she took a fancy to him there would be the end to pay. She'd never give him up, do what we would to separate her from him."

"She is already warned. She repeated to me a portion of her conversation with her uncle this morning when they were out riding, and he gave her explicitly to understand that if Mr. Vane presumed to approach her in the character of a lover, he will not be acceptable to him."

"If Fontaine only understood her as well as we do, he would never have done that. You know that Savella has always been actuated by the most contrary spirit; what we desire her particularly not to do she is always sure to attempt. Philip Vane now has an interest in her eyes, which he might never have possessed had she been left to herself; and when she learns that she can also rival this young girl, she will be sure to make an effort to do so."

"Oh, well, she can amuse herself by flirting with him, but marrying him is quite another thing."

"I tell you," replied Somerton, with some heat, "that if she falls in love with him she will have her own way at the risk of her life. With her fortune she should make a brilliant marriage. If we could get rid of encumbrances, we could return to Italy and give her a prince for a husband."

"I have already hinted as much to her."

"And how did she receive it?"

"She seemed to assent, but at the moment she was thinking of something else, and she said nothing with reference to it."

"Impress it upon her again. Dazzle her imagination with visions of high rank, and the prestige that accompanies it. Leave no means untried to keep her free from any entanglement in this semi-barbarous country. I already shudder at the thought of remaining among these mountains through the coming winter."

"Be sure that I shall do my best." And when dinner was announced the two conspirators went in with smiling faces and smooth words, to greet those against whom they cherished schemes of such deadly import.

(To be continued.)

SAVE A MOTHER'S TEAR.—Not long ago, two friends were sitting together engaged in letter-writing.

One was a young man from India, the other a female friend, part of whose family resides in that far-off land. The former was writing to his mother in India. When his letter was finished, his friend offered to enclose it in hers, to save postage. This he politely declined, saying: "If it be sent separately it will reach her sooner than if sent through a friend, and perhaps it may save her a tear." His friend was touched with his tender regard for his mother's feelings, and felt, with him, that it was worth paying the postage to save his mother a tear. Would that every boy and girl, every young man, and every young woman, were equally saving of a mother's tears.

## MRS. LARKALL'S BOARDING SCHOOL.

By the Author of "Man and His Idol."

### CHAPTER LXXIII.

#### MRS. LARKALL'S HISTORY.

Does a new life, like a young sunrise, break  
On the strange unrest of our night, confused  
With rain and stormy flow?

THE revelation which Mrs. Larkall had made to Dr. Amphlett, rested upon facts which fully accounted for the mystery which had overshadowed the past career of the mistress of the Boarding School.

That career had been a remarkable one. She was the daughter of an English clergyman, who had "gone out in a missionary capacity to Calcutta, had married, and obtained a church living there."

His daughter, Aurelia, was the belle of the society in which they moved. As a girl, she was remarkably beautiful, and was possessed of a certain grace and dignity of manner which appeared to render her irresistible to the opposite sex. She counted her conquests by scores; but amidst all the flattery and attention she received, her heart remained untouched. She admired many of the handsome fellows who knelt at her feet; but she did not love one of them, and it was only for amusement that she encouraged their advances.

One evening, the Dragon, an English ship, anchored in the river.

The captain had friends in Calcutta, and visited many of the families at whose houses Aurelia was a constant guest. In time, the rest of the ship's officers received invitations, and Aurelia met them. They were fine, handsome, manly fellows, and they brought with them a man who was not quite of their set, but who was really their superior in all other respects. They called him "the doctor," as being the medical officer of the ship, and under that designation Richard Norgate was introduced to Aurelia.

She loved him.

At the very first interview she seemed to yield to a fascination which not one of her suitors had ever before inspired. On his part, young Norgate was enchanted with the beautiful girl who smiled so graciously upon him—a favour to which he was not accustomed, for in spite of his personal advantages, he was a young man of no family or fortune, and his professional position was nothing.

The beautiful and wilful clergyman's daughter cared nothing for these obstacles. She loved the ship's doctor, and before the Dragon returned to England they were engaged to be married.

So, at least, it was represented.

Matters were, in reality, more advanced.

Aurelia and Norgate had been made man and wife by a secret marriage.

On its way back to England the Dragon was lost. The mournful news reached Calcutta that it had gone down with all hands.

Aurelia was frantic.

In her agony of mind she made her mother her confidant, confessed to her the indiscreet step of the secret marriage; and entreated her to break it to her father.

The mother did nothing of the sort.

She was a proud, vain, and rather artful woman; and having exhausted her passion in abuse of her daughter's folly and wickedness, she gave her the very worst advice a mother could give a child.

"At present," she said, "your position is a good one, as good as it ever will be after the absurd choice you have made. There will be a world of sympathy for the beautiful betrothed whose lover has gone down at sea. (They'll forget what his position was. A drowned doctor is as good as a drowned captain.) Conceal what has passed, and you will be still in the market, and your position will be as good as ever. But should this be allowed to transpire, what will be the consequence? Half the world won't believe that the marriage has taken place at all, and the other half will put the worst possible construction upon it—a construction that will leave you in as bad a position



as if there had been no marriage. Oh, it must be concealed, if possible, at all risks."

It was very possible.

Of the two witnesses to the marriage, one was an old nurse of Aurelia's who had since died, while the other was Richard's shipmate and bosom-friend, and he had gone down in the Dragon. These and the clergyman, to whom the family were unknown, were the only persons who were in the secret.

Aurelia obeyed her mother.

She retired with her to the hills during the warm weather, a proceeding which attracted no attention, as it is very customary, and when they returned, Aurelia resumed her place in society, improved in health and spirits, and looking more blooming than ever.

The tragedy which had thrown a gloom over her life was speedily forgotten.

She asserted her position as the *belles* of her circle; but she did not marry. Like many other women who have innumerable admirers, she either had no offer to her mind, or she had so many that she was embarrassed as to making a choice, and at last the malicious began to whisper that she "hung on hand."

About this time the great English merchant, Arnold Roydon Protheroe, whose name has so often figured in this narrative, was creating quite a sensation through his alleged enormous wealth and the recklessness with which he squandered it, and the mother of Aurelia determined that her child should at least have the advantage of an introduction to so desirable a person.

The introduction took place.

The result was such as to exceed the lady's most sanguine expectations.

Within a month the rich merchant proposed for her daughter's hand.

There was considerable disparity in their ages. One was fifty at least, the other still young, though verging upon the "fine woman" period of life, which is altogether beyond the "charming girl" stage. In spite of this difference, the offer was accepted and Aurelia Norgate became Mrs. Protheroe.

Six months of unalloyed happiness, as it seemed, followed the union.

Then, one stormy night during the rainy season, there was a terrible commotion in the merchant's residence. The dinner was just over, and the friends in the full enjoyment of that period of the advanced evening when the temperature is endurable, when an uninvited guest was announced.

He followed his card into the room, and marched straight to the head of the table, where the mistress of the establishment was.

"Mr. Norgate!" said the host, reading from the card.

There was no necessity for the stranger to respond to that name.

His identity was proved beyond all question.

At the first sight of him Mrs. Norgate *alias* Protheroe had fainted.

The scene that followed may be imagined. Norgate claimed his wife. Aurelia at first declared that he had no right to apply that term to her. Protheroe stormed and talked of having the impostor, as he called him, kicked out of the house. The commotion was terrible, almost as much so in its way as the storm which had burst and was raging around the house.

In the midst of it all Norgate stood his ground manfully.

He had, it seemed, been the only survivor of the crew of the doomed Dragon, had managed to keep afloat on a spar, had been picked up by a ship bound for China, had gone there, had been seized during a skirmish between the Chinese and the English and carried into the interior, had eventually made his escape, and then, some time having elapsed, had resolved not to send any account of his whereabouts to Aurelia, but to put her constancy to a severe test by presenting himself suddenly before her after a long interval. Circumstances had led to the unexpected prolongation of that interval; but he had put his scheme into execution at last, and had landed at Calcutta, only to find that the woman he had loved and trusted had married a man twice her age for the sake of an establishment.

Then, in the bitterness of his wounded pride and outraged love, he had determined to come and claim her by virtue of that secret marriage.

Protheroe heard the story and did not doubt a word of it.

Aurelia, however, still protested that the secret-marriage part of the story was a fabrication, until Norgate suddenly turned the tables upon her by threatening to produce the nurse who had attended on her during her confinement up in the hills.

Here was a dilemma from which nothing could extricate the lady.

She could not out-face this evidence, and it left her in a perplexing position.

Either she was a wife when a mother, or a mother without being a wife.

Driven upon the horns of this dilemma, she admitted everything, and threw herself upon the clemency of Protheroe. The old man was deeply attached to Aurelia, but his principles would not permit him to compromise a matter of this sort, even if Norgate would have submitted to it.

The result was that she left his house and accompanied Norgate; but the old passion which had united them had died out. They mutually harassed and detested one another. At last, in a moment of disgust, Norgate suddenly embarked on board a ship lying in the harbour, and disappeared no one knew whither.

Up to that time Aurelia had been led to suppose that the child to which she had given birth was no longer in existence, it having been her mother's policy to get rid, so far as she could, of all traces of the first and most indiscreet marriage. But now the fact that her child lived came to Aurelia's ears; she sought it out, and it became the one solace of her life. She, however, determined not to acknowledge it as other than an adopted child until she had reinstated herself in a position such as would give her offspring a fair chance in the world.

With this view she resolved on sailing for Europe.

"There," she thought, "I shall be unknown. I may begin the world afresh, and should my efforts lead me on to fortune, I will acknowledge my little Gertrude, and perhaps I may be able to do for her what I have failed to do for myself—to marry her into an unexceptionable position."

Protheroe heard of the intention, approved of it, and secretly assisted Aurelia, both in the way of money and introductions. It was his wish that the child, whom he loved for the mother's sake should have every care, and be reared as a lady. With that view, he suggested that she should be attended, like other young girls arriving from India, by an ayah, and recommended one for the purpose.

That was Mahala.

Accompanied by her child and by this wily native, Aurelia in due time arrived in England. During the voyage she had made up her mind what to do. Her education had been good, and as she absolutely needed occupation, if only as a relief to her incessant brooding over the past, she resolved to devote herself to the education of young ladies—making Gertrude her first and most beloved pupil.

Accident led her to assume the name of Larkall, and it was in this manner that the celebrated Mrs. LARKALL'S BOARDING SCHOOL came to be established at Brighton.

How it thrives; how rapidly it expanded itself and asserted its position among the scholastic establishments of that town, we already know, and it is satisfactory to be able to record that the foundress did thus by perseverance, industry and tact, succeed to an extent in making a position in the world, which promised to render herself and her child independent of its smiles or frowns.

The crime with which Roland Hershaw stained his soul, once more let loose the floodgates of trouble on this woman's devoted head.

It was with bitterly remorseful feelings that she heard of Protheroe's murder.

But this was not the worst.

Sometimes when she had reflected upon the old man's goodness of heart and undisguised affection for her, she had said to herself, "He will do no more for me; but he may remember Gertrude. Oh, yes! it was his wish that she should be reared as a lady, and he may give her the means to support that character."

He had done so.

But so little do we know what we wish, that the very thing on which Mrs. Larkall had counted as the making of her child, had been the ruin of her.

Had it not been for that clause in Protheroe's will, providing that in the event of his nephew failing to come forward, the bulk of the property should go to his wife's daughter—he had never publicly disclaimed Aurelia—Hershaw would have had no temptation to darken the Boarding School with his presence, and the fate which had overtaken Gertrude Norman might have been averted.

It was easy to see this now. As Richard Norgate, who having passed through many adventures, had settled down as Dr. Amphlett, a mesmerist professor—as he sat in the library talking with his long-neglected wife over the strange story we have related, all this came out clearly enough. But so it ever is.

For, backward traced, the path of life is clear; but now the more important question became—what as to the future?

They discussed the question as man and wife.

Long years had passed over both their heads. Experience had exercised a mellowing and enlightening influence over their minds. Seen through the long vista of time—which among other results had had the effect of weakening the moral perceptions of the man—Aurelia's faithlessness did not present quite so dark an aspect to the doctor as it had done in his youth.

And then the discovery that the child of their love—his child—still lived and was in trouble, was a fresh link—and thus it came about naturally enough, if one looks at all sides, that Richard Norgate tacitly acknowledged the mistress of the Boarding School as his wife.

It was in that character, and in the still more important one of the mother of his child that he now asked her opinion on the important point—What was to be done as to the future?

The question occupied several days in its discussion. At the expiration of that time a telegram was received from Mr. Walmesley Dyott, which greatly simplified matters.

It contained the particulars of the doom of Roland Hershaw.

## CHAPTER LXXIV.

### ARSENIC AS A COSMETIC.

All other passions own a just control,  
But vanity is boundless as the soul.

It was a dull, sodden evening toward the close of the summer.

Rain had fallen all day; and the clouds were still low and dark, except in the west, where the low sun gave them the aspect of dying embers.

Saturated with wet, the foliage about the Towers was of a vivid green, and the heavy drops fell from leaf to leaf, and so to the puddled ground with a dreary, monotonous sound.

Carla Bruce, looking out at the one open swinging sash of the dining-room window, felt herself shudder at the dreary prospect.

She had been invited with her cousin to spend a week or two at the Towers, which Edward loved to haunt as the scene of happiness never to be renewed. On this evening, the lad was lounging in a great reading chair, which Amy used to love to sit in, at the farther end of the room, and now as Carla looked from the window, he raised his eyes, contemplated her for some seconds, then rose, and going towards her, put his hand on her shoulder.

Carla started and looked up.

"Always quiet, always sad," Edward said, "have you, too, a hidden sorrow, Carla?"

The idea of the possibility of such a thing seemed to occur to him now for the first time, and he put it in that abrupt way.

"I am not sad, Edward," the girl replied, "only—it is a dull evening—and—"

At this point she broke down, and her white cheek flushed a little, looking delicate as an apple-blossom.

Edward saw that she was only trying to conceal her thoughts.

"Carla," he said, taking her hand and holding it in his very tenderly, "you are almost my sister, as it seems, from the years that we have grown up together. And this great sorrow that has come to me seems, I know not how, to have tightened the bonds of affection between us. Can you not then confide in me?"

She looked up timidly into his face: then her eyes fell.

"I have no secrets from you, Edward," she answered. "None worth concealing."

"Not one—not a little one?" he asked, playfully. To his surprise Carla's eyes filled with tears.

"Ah, darling! You are deceiving me," he said; "something is preying upon your heart. You have some grief—"

She put up her hand to stop him.

"You will not tell papa this?" she said; "you must not make him unhappy."

"I promise it," said Edward. "And now, you will make me your confessor?"

"Not now. It is late, and Lady Agatha will expect me. Not now, Edward; I must go."

She drew her hands from his, and crossing the room, disappeared.

Edward stood for a long time watching the door at which she had gone out, as if his eyes still rested upon her. Then he said:

"She cannot love me?"

And he sat down in the seat which Carla had occupied just before, and thought it over, long and steadily.

In the midst of his reflections a scream, long, loud, and piercing, went through the house.

Starting up, Edward went to the door.

Carla was there, coming to fetch him.

"Oh, Edward!" she said; "what is to be done? Mahala is poisoned!"

"Poisoned?"

"Yes; I know not how it has happened; but she is in agony. She is like one on fire."

A renewal of the screams seemed to confirm this.

"Poor wretch! But you forget, Carla, Dr. Amphlett is in the library with Sir Sydney, Wolff, and Dyott. How fortunate!"

It did, indeed, seem fortunate that on this day the

persons mentioned had assembled to hold a conference over the question of Wolf's fortune. There could be no doubt but that Mahala was in horrible pain. She lay upon the sofa in one of the drawing-rooms, writhing in agony.

"What have you taken, Mahala?" asked Dr. Amphlett, as they all entered the room.

"Oh, I don't know—I can't tell. It is fire—fire! I am burning to death."

"But you must tell me what it is, or I can't give you relief," said the doctor.

"The white powder," groaned Mahala.

"Arsenic?"

The ayah nodded.

"Foolish girl! Why have you taken this?"

"It was all a lie the gipsy woman told me," cried Mahala, bitterly; "she said it was a cosmetic, that it would whiten my skin. And it is killing me."

Without loss of time, such antidotes as were at hand were administered to the foolish victim of an incurable vanity; but they did not produce the expected effects very rapidly.

In spite of them, the patient sank.

The acuteness of pain was followed by extreme debility.

Mahala herself was convinced that the hour of her death was approaching.

Finding this, and having grave doubts himself as to her recovery, Dr. Amphlett saw that there was not a moment to be lost if the ayah had, as he surmised she might have, any revelations to make in respect of Peter Wolf. So, bending over her, he said:

"Mahala, you are in a dangerous state. Is there nothing you would like to say in case you should not recover? Think. You once boasted that you could help Wolf to identify himself. Will you not do it?"

The question may appear disinterested, since it helped Wolf to gain a fortune, which might otherwise have gone to the doctor's own child, Gertrude; but the doctor knew what he was about. Besides, he was infatuated with the idea of the fortune to be gained by means of the ayah's amulet.

In answer to the doctor, Mahala, replied by giving the statement she had once made to Roland Henshaw. Peter Wolf was, she said, actually Peter Roydon Protheroe, and in proof she pointed to a white scar near his right eye, imperceptible except in one light, to which she had often heard the dead merchant refer as having been caused by a woman whom he had provoked, throwing a knife at him, while he was a child.

The scar was perceptible to all.

In addition to this statement, Mahala confessed to much of the wickedness of which she had been guilty, particularly to the stealing of the strange diamonds, which had occasioned so much trouble, and also produced them from her bosom.

At eight o'clock that night the ayah died, the victim of her own folly.

Doctor Amphlett was with her as she expired, and a few minutes after, he came out of the room his eyes blazing with satisfaction, his face radiant, and his step elastic.

In the dark passage leading to the staircase, he stopped, and placed something carefully in his pocket-book.

That night he left the Towers for London.

## CHAPTER LXXV.

### IN SEARCH OF THE TREASURE.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,

They for the voyage were prepared.

Wordsworth.

It was Mahala's amulet over which Dr. Amphlett gloated, and which he so carefully secured on quitting the chamber of the dead.

Before the sun had risen on another day, he made the discovery on the verge of which he had trembled for months.

In the solitude of his own study he had placed, side by side, the two oblong slips of vellum, covered with Arabic, of which we have so often spoken—the one found by Roland Henshaw among the papers of his murdered victim—the other owned by Mahala, who called it her amulet.

In combination, these documents constituted the key to a treasure, one million sterling in value.

The history of this treasure is historical.

The only point which has hitherto baffled the most searching inquiry is as to what became of it. Our narrative furnishes the answer.

But let us see what was the nature of the discovery which Dr. Amphlett that night made.

As far back as the year 1804, a Spanish ship was returning from South America to Cadiz, having on board some millions of dollars in specie, besides diamonds and other precious stones of enormous value, roughly estimated at a million sterling. When within

a few days' sail of Cadiz, they were warned that the English fleet was off the coast, and that they had no chance of making harbour. In this predicament the captain determined to shape his course back to the West Indies, and then run for the north part of the Spanish main.

This step was, however, most distasteful to the crew. They were far advanced in a state of mutiny, and though they obeyed orders, it was with reluctance, and with muttered oaths and threats of vengeance.

At length the temptation stole upon them to seize the treasure; and one day, when they were off a small cluster of uninhabited islands fifteen leagues to the southward of Madeira, they set upon the captain, killed him, and anchored off the central island, which was high, flat, green at the top, and about three miles round.

In this island they landed their treasure, and having dug a trench in the white sand above high-water mark, they buried it, and sailed away, purposing to return when it might be safe to do so.

But the justice of heaven soon overtook them.

They had hardly passed Tobago, when the ship ran aground, and of the whole crew, only two seamen escaped.

One of these perished in the hospital of Santa Cruz, having first told the tale to one Christian Cruise, who—it is an historical fact—afterwards persuaded the English government to send out an expedition in search of the hidden treasure, in which search they signally failed.

They did so for this reason, that the clue to it was in the hands of the other survivor of the wrecked ship, a Spaniard, whom we will call Lopez, who in the course of his wandering life, found his way to Calcutta.

Lopez only touched at that port, intending to take the very earliest opportunity of going to secure the treasure. But there were difficulties in the way of this. He was covetous and wanted it all to himself: he was timid, and feared that if he made any stir about it he should probably lose the whole, and perhaps get a halter instead for his share in the murder of the captain. So he idled about Calcutta for years.

In the course of this idling, two things happened—two of the three which happen to most men. He married—and he died.

His marriage was with a pretty black-eyed creole, by whom he had a daughter.

She was called—Mahala.

The mother died in giving her birth, and she was but a child when Lopez himself fell a victim to an epidemic.

In his last moments he sent for Arnold Roydon Protheroe, the rich merchant, who had shown him some kindness, and told him the story of the crime and the treasure. Protheroe affected to disbelieve it; but Lopez, in proof of his statement, handed the merchant the piece of vellum which was afterwards discovered in the portmanteau by Roland Henshaw, and explained to him that this was drawn up by a Spaniard who understood Arabic, on the island where the treasure was buried, and that it described its amount, exact position, and other facts necessary for regaining it.

Before the statement was finished the man died. That prevented his explaining that the vellum given was one of two drawn up—one the key to the other—and that the other had, for safety, been sewn into a dress worn by the dead mother, and which became in due course the legacy of her child Mahala.

Owing to this, it happened that when Protheroe submitted the document to persons skilled in Arabic, they declared their inability to make sense of it, and though he preserved it among his papers, the merchant soon ceased to think seriously of the wonderful story with which it was connected.

He did not, however, forget the prayers of the dying man. He saw that Mahala wanted for nothing, and when the painful circumstances occurred which resulted in Mrs. Larkall's going to England, accompanied by Gertrude, her daughter, he, as we have seen, proposed that Mahala should accompany the latter as her ayah.

Before that time Mahala had accustomed herself to carry the vellum, which some old crone among her people sealed up for her, because it had belonged to her mother. She called it her amulet. She believed it brought her luck. But from first to last she had no idea of its real value.

Dr. Amphlett had now discovered it, and the discovery almost drove him wild with excitement.

For days and nights after he had made the discovery he could neither eat nor sleep. The mere hope of obtaining the treasure seemed enough for existence, but when, in moments of depression, he thought of the possibility of failure—of the chances that some one might have been there before him—that perhaps, after all, these vellums (whose history, as stated above, he did not know) might be utterly useless,

having once served their purpose—the bare idea drove him to the verge of delirium.

Mrs. Larkall, to whom he did not communicate a word of this discovery, began to fear that she had reunited herself to a lunatic.

Her great and enduring source of anxiety was as to the fate of her daughter, Gertrude, and the doctor displayed some interest in this matter also; but it was a very secondary consideration compared to the other. To get the fortune was the main point: to secure the safety of the heiress was a matter that might be attended to afterwards.

In the midst of these hopes, doubts, and fears, a brilliant idea occurred to the doctor, who immediately fell to cursing his folly in not having thought of it before.

Why should not Joanna, these crows, assist him with her occult powers of vision?

She was still a patient at his house in Hyde Park, and he at once hastened to put her faculties to the test. The test was satisfactory. Joanna actually described in her mesmeric sleep, an island, "high, flat, green at top, and about three miles around." And she uttered an exclamation of joy on perceiving a cavern in it full of gold and precious stones.

On this assurance of the reality of the fortune, the doctor calmed down. He determined to set about this business of getting the fortune in a methodical and regular fashion.

First he devoted all his energies to securing Peter Wolf's fortune, and as by the death of Roland Henshaw, all opposition had disappeared, this was soon accomplished.

The nephew of the Indian merchant asserted his position, recovered the name to which he was entitled—that of Peter Roydon Palmer—and though he found that Henshaw's extravagance had greatly eaten into it, there was enough of his uncle's fortune left for him to cut a very decent figure in the world.

Out of this fortune Dr. Amphlett received for his services two thousand pounds.

His next step was to sell off his house in Hyde Park, his museum, and everything else of value, turning it all to cash.

Lastly, under his direction and with the concurrence of Mrs. Larkall, the famous boarding-school was broken up, the lease sold, and the premises dismantled. Within three months its place knew it no more.

Within that time Dr. Morgate and his lady—as we must call Dr. Amphlett and Mrs. Larkall—set out in their own yacht, bound, it was said, to the West Indies.

The spot specially marked on the chart in the doctor's cabin was a small cluster of uninhabited islands, fifteen degrees southward of Madeira, the island which Joanna had seen in her last trance, as it happened, for she soon after expired, the victim of nervous debility and an unrequited passion.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

### THE EXPLORER.

Time flies, and still they weep, for never  
The fugitive can time restore.

For she once fled, his fled for ever,  
And all the rest shall smile no more.

M. G. Lewis.

HAVE you forgotten how, in the prologue to our story, a strange guest arrived at an hotel in Liverpool, in the dead of a December night?

It was, if you will recollect, a woman who, surrounded by all the appliances that wealth could offer her, yet knew neither peace nor rest, tortured as she was by a phantom terror which pursued her through all her days and nights and made life a horror and a burden to her.

That night closed in ten years after the events we have narrated.

And that woman was—GERTRUDE NORMAN.

Terribly she had expiated her youth of sin with a life of suffering.

That face of leprosy whiteness—that dead mask covering up every trace of life and animation—on which all looked with a shudder, was not more changed than was the woman who wore it. All the deeper lines in a character naturally strong had intensified—the woman only yet in the prime of her life had become haughty and imperious. But allied with this stronger element there was a source of terrible weakness.

The great event of her life had blighted her, as the lightning blights the tree.

Terror—the extreme terror which the vengeance of the Society had inspired, had gone beyond the point at which reason could counteract its effects. It had resulted in mania. Reasonable in all other things, when Gertrude Norman entered that hotel at Liverpool she was, in respect of a haunting, overwhelming fear, a monomaniac.

A few words will serve to show how matters had been brought to this point.

Her eccentric agents of the Society. The doctor did not appear possible to circumvent her. She was constant in the idea that she was right, or, at all events, inevitable.

The journey to Paris, her perpetual a casual acquaintance could not every footstep and return to was exhausted.

In this Henshaw's effort to conveyed institution maintained for.

On her weak, unyielding tyrannical torture to.

In her turned to.

That lady had ing her which as Gertrude.

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From her ward.

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Her escape from the Austrian prison threw the agents of the terrible Society, for a time, off their scent. The poison administered by the German doctor did still more to baffle them, since it changed her appearance so greatly that it became almost impossible to recognize her. Taking advantage of these circumstances, she contrived to elude the spies who were constantly on the watch, vigilant as they were, and in the humble capacity of lady's maid to a sister of the German doctor, made her way to Paris, intending to get back to England, if possible, in the vague idea that there she would be exposed to less danger—or, at all events, that the fate which she felt to be inevitable might be warded off for a time.

The journey was full of peril, and when she reached Paris, her life was a torture to her. She lived in perpetual fear. She dared not make a friend, or even a casual acquaintance, lest they might be spies prepared to yield her up at the first opportunity. She could not venture to stir abroad, as every shadow, every footfall, had its terrors for her. The lady who pined and had befriended her so far, was obliged to return to Vienna; and as by that time her money was exhausted, the plight in which she found herself was most pitiable.

In this extremity she learned the news of Roland Henshaw's terrible fate.

The effect was cruel. Brain-fever ensued, and she was conveyed to a hospital, in which, and in a charitable institution for convalescents attached to it, she remained for many months.

On her recovery she found herself a beggar, terribly weak, and, worst of all, possessed by a demon which tyrannized over her weak mind, and made her life a torture to her.

In her misery she, after a long hesitation, ventured to write to Mrs. Larkall.

That letter did not reach its destination until the lady had quitted Brighton, and was gone, accompanying her husband, Dr. Amphlett, on the voyage from which so much was anticipated.

Gertrude did not know this.

Her fears persuaded her that the letter had fallen into the hands of her enemies, and apprehensive lest the address should reveal her to them, she fled away from the humble abode in which she had sought temporary shelter, and thus put it out of the power of her nearest and best friend to aid her.

From that point the course of her life was all downward.

She sank from stage to stage.

Scared by the phantom which she had no power to combat, but which, on the contrary, increased in power in exact proportion to her weakness, she could do nothing for a living, and it was not long before she was to be seen in the holes and corners of Paris—a city which she hated, but had not the means of leaving—a scared, shivering, starving, ragged outcast.

One day in the bright summer weather, Paris was all life and animation.

It was the fiftieth day of some one of its many rulers—some representative of one of those dynasties which rival even those of Egypt in number and diversity. The streets were crowded with holiday folks. Banners waved from the windows. The houses were decorated with fanciful designs and lanterns to be illuminated at nightfall. Through the main thoroughfares rolled a string of equipages, bound some to the Bois de Boulogne, some to Versailles, others for minor popular resorts. In short, from the highest to the lowest, the Parisians were bent on enjoying themselves, as only the Parisians seem to have the power of doing.

Such a day in Paris would have been woefully incomplete without the occasional outbursts of military bands, and the thundering echoes of artillery. To a military nation the sounds of martial music and the smell of "villanous saltpetre," are indispensable adjuncts to pleasure.

But though the Parisians highly appreciated this kind of thing, the Parisian horses did not all take it in the same light. Hence it would happen that the sudden music of a brass band or the boom of a gun would now and then half-unseat a careless horseman, or endanger the safety of an equipage.

An incident of this kind occurred near the famous bridge, the Pont Neuf.

A carriage was rolling along drawn by two magnificent white horses. On a sudden, the band heading a detachment of cuirassiers struck up. The horses started and plunged. The occupants of the carriage, a lady and gentleman, screamed out, and with their cry there mingled another, louder and more distressing.

It broke from the lips of a poor wretch, whom a kick from one of the plunging horses had sent, bleeding and terrified, to the ground.

The carriage was stopped. The gentleman who occupied the seat nearest the pavement tore open the door,

and descending, rushed to the miserable object, who was moaning and quivering in the midst of a rapidly gathered crowd.

"Who is it?" he demanded, eagerly.

"Only a beggar-woman," replied a surly baker, whose arms were loaded with bread in rings like shackles.

"Is she hurt?"

"She's frightened," said the baker.

The gentleman pushed through the crowd and bent down. Then rising, with an exclamation of the utmost astonishment, he rushed to the carriage side.

"My God! Aurelia," he said, "tis Gertrude!"

In this way Mrs. Larkall recovered her child, of whose existence she had begun to despair.

By this accident the outward fount herself restored to affluence.

It appeared by the story which Dr. Amphlett—as we will still call him—told his daughter that the expedition to the island "fifteen leagues to the southward of Madeira" had proved a complete success. By the help of the two scrolls of vellum, covered with Arabic, the treasure had been found, and secured, and as it was discovered stowed away in casks, beneath the sand, only the captain and one of his men knew the real value of the prize.

The wealth thus placed at the command of the doctor was sufficient to gratify the most reckless expenditure. Already the millionaire of whose antecedents nobody could glean anything, was attracting attention by the Oriental splendour of his establishment and equipages, and was known as "The Mysterious Englishman." So far as this world's goods went, therefore, the doctor and Mrs. Larkall had the most ample materials for happiness. The canker in the bud of their perfect contentment had been the loss of their child.

And now, by a direct interposition of providence, as it seemed, she was restored to them.

But also, for the fatality of all earthly happiness, Gertrude was no longer the being Mrs. Larkall had known her. The terrible experience of the past had poisoned the very springs of her existence. Terror, like the upas tree, overshadowed her mind, and shed its baleful influence over her from hour to hour.

The palace—for it was nothing less—which she inhabited at Paris, became a prison.

She never ventured out but in a close carriage.

She did not permit herself to look out of window except through a slit in the blinds, which were kept drawn by day as well as by night.

No visitors were admitted to her. Friendships, even acquaintances were out of the question. She suspected every one, and therefore refused to see a living being except her parents and the domestics. Even the latter she regarded with a suspicious eye, construing their lightest words into proofs that they were agents of the Society—that mystic Society, the fear of which was driving her rapidly to the verge of madness.

After a time she adopted the idea that her only safety was in being constantly armed and guarded. She, therefore, had always upon her table by day, and at her bedside by night, loaded pistols, and she spent hours with her two female attendants—Valentin and Charmion—in acquiring thorough mastery over the weapons. For this purpose, a rifle-gallery was built in the rear of the palace, and there the poor wretch acquired extraordinary proficiency in the use of arms, being able to accomplish all the feats which are usually regarded as marvels by the unskilful.

This for a time soothed and diverted her mind, but it was not for long. She grew weary of her splendid imprisonment. The palace became hateful to her. The idea took possession of her that real safety was only to be found in continually flying from place to place. Amphlett for a time overruled this mania; but unfortunately, when it was at its height, he fell a sudden victim to cholera. Gertrude's already weakened mind took the impression that she had been poisoned by the Society, partly in order that she might be accused of his death and brought to justice for it.

After that nothing would restrain her.

A travelling carriage of the most perfect description was secretly ordered, as if for a royal personage, and in this Gertrude, her mother, and the two attendants, travelled from place to place, always pursued by enemies, real or imaginary.

For a time Mrs. Larkall submitted to this; but since Amphlett's death she had aged rapidly, and as her health was bad, she declared herself unable to sustain this trial, and therefore returned to Paris, where she lived in seclusion, receiving day by day from Valentin or Charmion accounts of the progress of her unfortunate child.

These letters are in existence. They run in regular order up to the date of that night at Liverpool. Then there occurs a break; but an undated fragment, probably written by Valentin a week or two after, contains this passage:

"All our exertions are in vain. From the night when our unfortunate mistress quitted the hotel at Liverpool, nothing has been heard of her. We waited day after day, anxiously expecting the signal which she was to forward us, implying where we were to rejoin her. Up to this time it has not come. It is our duty to report our solemn conviction that some sad catastrophe has befallen her. The night was very cold, and the snow was beginning to fall heavily, when she quitted the hotel, weak from fasting, and but insufficiently clad. Our fear is that the exposure under such circumstances has proved fatal to her. Of course we still hope, though it is almost against hope, and weary heaven incessantly with prayers for her safety."

The prayers of these simple women and of the sorrowing mother were answered after God's will, not according to their wishes.

They never beheld the object of their devotion again in this world.

#### THE END.

**PRINCE CONSORT'S WINDSOR ASSOCIATION.**—The annual exhibition of this admirable institution, established by the Prince Consort for stimulating and encouraging the working-man in habits of industry and economy, will be held in the Home Park on the 14th of July, under the immediate patronage of the Queen, and the various prizes will be distributed by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. A dinner will be given to all the exhibitors of cottage handicraft, and a military band will, for the first time since the death of the illustrious founder, be in attendance.

**A HINT.**—According to a letter from Captain Burton, the Spaniards have succeeded in neutralizing the dreadful effects of the climate at Fernando Po by living, or at least having their hospitals, upon high ground. He says, "Whenever a Spanish soldier or sailor falls ill he is carried up to the station, the altitude of which is about 1,200 feet. Invalids soon recover at Santa Cecilia. Healthy men, wearing the thinnest forage caps, and showing the ruddy hue of health, may be seen working in the sun at all hours. The officer commanding (a man of delicate constitution) has never had a day's sickness."

**EXTRAORDINARY DUEL AT HEIDELBERG.**—A tragical event has just taken place at Heidelberg. Late in the evening of the 15th a student belonging to the body of the Swabians was found lying on the ground weltering in his blood. He had discharged a pistol in the region of the heart, but the ball, having been turned aside by touching a rib, missed the heart, passed through the lungs, and lodged under the right shoulder-blade, whence it was afterwards extracted. At first the natural belief was that voluntary suicide had been intended, but some letters which had been written by the student showed that he had been the victim of a shameful kind of duel. A foreign student had been grossly insulted by the Swabian, and satisfaction was demanded; but instead of fighting in the usual way, an agreement was come to to draw lots, which of the two should destroy himself within a delay of a fortnight. The lot fell on the Swabian. When the time was about to expire, the young man, whose father was dangerously ill, solicited an extension of the delay, but the request was refused, and the attempt at self-destruction was consequently made. Some hopes are entertained that the wound will not prove fatal, but all the entreaties of the heads of the University and of his friends cannot extort from him a promise not to repeat the desperate act. To all their solicitations his only answer is, "I have not pledged my honour to seriously wound myself, but to put an end to my life, and I will keep my promise."

**ARRIVAL OF TROOPS.**—The Galatea, 26-gun screw frigate, Captain Maguire, has arrived at Spithead from Corfu, Malta, and Gibraltar, with troops and invalids on board. She sailed from Corfu on 2nd ult., Malta on 6th, and Gibraltar on 12th. She brought the following troops from Corfu:—29th Company of Royal Engineers—Second Captain G. W. Stockley, Lieutenant Jones, 5 sergeants, 18 corporals, 73 privates, 16 women, and 16 children; Staff of the Royal Engineers—Brevet-Major de Vere, Lieutenants Savi, Rowe, and English, Assistant-Surgeon Meares; Medical Staff—Surgeon-Major Grant; 1st class clerk of works Marshall; 2nd Battalion, 4th Regiment, 1 sergeant, 1 woman, and 2 children; 1st Battalion, 9th Regiment, 1 sergeant, 2 women, and 9 children; 2nd Battalion, 9th Regiment, 2 men, 1 woman, and 1 child; Commissariat Staff Corps, 8 men and 2 women; barrack department, 6 men, 3 women, and 29 children; prison staff, 4 men, 3 women, and 17 children; 2 widows of soldiers and 5 children. From Malta the Galatea brought, as invalids from regiments in the garrison, 5 sergeants, 3 corporals, 97 privates, 8 women, and 22 children. The Galatea steamed into Portsmouth harbour and landed the troops from Corfu at the dockyard, the 29th Company of Royal Engi-

poers being forwarded on by the military authorities to Aldershot by the South-Western Railway, and the remainder to the depôts of their respective regiments. The invalided soldiers were landed from the ship and forwarded to the Royal Military Hospital at Netley. A few naval invalids brought home in the ship were transferred to H.M.S. Victory and the Royal Naval Hospital at Haslar.

#### LIBERAL OFFERS TO SOLDIERS RE-ENGAGING.

We congratulate the Army on the issue of a Royal Warrant, framed under the orders of Lord de Grey, a true friend to the British soldier, by which we feel assured that the service will retain a very large number of men, who will accept Lord de Grey's liberal offer. We are well aware that this liberal consideration of the value of a formed soldier over an un moulded "Tourneroo" or Johnny Raw, has long been understood and as long in vain pressed on the attention of various Secretaries-at-War. It has remained to Lord de Grey to carry out this measure, and to establish in the recruiting market the principle that the price of the article should correspond to the value of it intrinsically and according to the demand for it.

By this warrant it will be seen that the soldier who now re-engages at the expiration of his first term of service will receive the value of a new kit, a bounty of £2 in cash, a re-engagement sum of £1, and the Queen's gratuity of £1, and also a furlough for two months to enable him, if so disposed, to visit his friends and native place.

Nor is this all. The soldier who has taken his discharge and may re-engage within twelve months, will be allowed to count every day of his former service instead of one-half as heretofore. He will also be allowed to come at once on the good-conduct pay he had when he took his discharge. The age is limited to thirty-four years.

The provisions are to apply also to soldiers who purchased their discharges and may re-enlist, their age not being above thirty-four.

The soldiers who serve in India, China, the Mauritius, Ceylon, Australian Colonies, and New Zealand will, on re-engaging, receive £5 in compensation for the furlough, which is impracticable on account of the distance of those stations. The men who serve in the West Indies, Canada, the Cape of Good Hope, and St. Helena will be granted £3 each instead of a furlough, besides the Queen's gratuity of £1.

We have also to state that soldiers who are now serving in what has so facetiously been styled the "Army of Reserve" will be allowed to re-enlist into the army without being required to repay the amount they have received while in the Reserve Force.

#### ALL FOR TWO STRAWBERRIES.

The *Echo de la Marne* gives an account of a suicide and a murder by members of the same family at Loisy (Marne), the two crimes being the consequence of an incident futile in itself—the eating of two strawberries by a child.

The daughter of a M. Renaux, a resident in the above-named village, was to make her first Communion a week ago. In the morning, however, before proceeding to the church, while standing before a dish of strawberries, forgetting for a moment the solemn ceremony in which she was to take part, she inadvertently tasted the fruit.

This was, of course, sufficient to exclude her from the Communion on that day. The child, nevertheless, attended the service, but without joining in it, and the curé, learning from her the cause, spoke to her kindly, and told her to return the following morning. She reached home and stated what had taken place to her parents, and the latter appear to have reproached her in severe language, and to have terrified her by an exaggerated description of the consequences of her fault.

After retiring to rest the child's terror seems to have overcome her reason, as she rose, dressed herself, and, secretly leaving the house, fled across the fields, and took refuge at a farm at some short distance. Here she was recognized, but, instead of being sent home, she was taken to the school which she attended in the village.

In the meantime, the mother happening to enter the room where her daughter slept, found the bed empty. She was seized with a terrible misgiving that her daughter must have drowned herself. The mother instantly rushed in the direction of the Marne, and was seen no more. Four days later her body was found on a low bank at Solanges.

A brother-in-law of Madame Renaux, residing in the same neighbourhood, had for some time previously given signs of mental derangement, and the disappearance of his brother's wife, for whom he had a great respect and affection, sufficed to entirely unsettle his mind.

The night preceding the morning on which the body was found he became most violent, and from time to time took up his howling-piece. His wife, who was alone in the house with him, was struck with terror, but dared not move. In the morning he went out with his gun, but was shortly after seen returning in a state of great excitement. A farm servant had just time to inform Madame Renaux of her danger, and she concealed herself in a garret.

The servant, however, paid for his devotedness with his life, as Renaux turned on the man and discharged the gun into his breast, killing him on the spot. Renaux next pointed the second barrel to his own forehead, and blew out his brains.

It was at the moment that this tragedy was being accomplished that the body of Madame Renaux was found at Solanges. The murderer leaves a son, and the murdered man a wife and two children.

## THE STEPMOTHER.

### CHAPTER IV.

The trembling stars  
Saw crimes gigantic stalking through the gloom,  
With front erect that hide their head by day,  
And making night still darker by their deeds.

The instant Russell was left to himself, his air of listlessness vanished, and a keen look of interest and energy appeared on his face.

"This is really a critical state of affairs," he muttered. "A war on my supplies, the destruction of the goose that lays my golden eggs! If that last will is not suppressed, I shall be thrown upon my wits."

He hastened to attire himself in a neat suit of black, put on a pair of cloth slippers, and placed a loaded pistol in his pocket. He then produced a dark lantern, a small iron bar, a stout knife, and various articles it was possible might be of service. He then looked from his window.

"The night is as dark as Egypt," he muttered. "I can try the keys as well in the evening as to wait till midnight."

He concluded his preparations, and quietly took his departure from the villa by the back entrance, and directed his steps to the little boat-house we have noticed. A moment more and he was dropping down the river, within a few rods of the shore.

As he approached his destination, he beheld lights shining through the gloom, and from them readily determined the position of the lawyer's house. Proceeding directly toward it, he landed at the foot of the garden, and secreted his boat in some shrubs lining the shore.

The night was indeed favourable to his schemes, there being but few persons stirring.

Securing his tools he went up to the house, scanning it cautiously. Seeing a light in one of the side windows, he crept up and looked in, beholding the lawyer himself dozing before a dying fire. No one else was in the room, and no other light was visible in the dwelling.

"The housekeeper has retired," thought Russell, "and her master will soon follow her example. I may as well be making acquaintance with the office."

He went round the mansion, keeping in the cover of the shrubbery, although the night was gently black, and soon reached the office, which was a small wing on the opposite side of the house.

"No one in the house can see a light in this room," he thought, as he paused in front of the door, "and no one on the outside can see even a glimmer on account of the thick clumps of evergreens and the board shutters. I should say Clayville had arranged everything to favour my visit!"

Realizing the necessity of changing the wills without disturbance and without leaving a trace of his presence, he felt the lock of the door, and softly tried key after key, eventually effecting an entrance.

All was dark and still within the room. He listened a moment, and then turned on the light of the lantern, scanning the room to assure himself that no one was sleeping there, and that no dog had been left to guard it.

His next movement was to look at the furniture and decide where to begin his search.

There was little more than the ordinary furniture of an office in the room, and the first object that attracted and fixed Russell's attention was a heavy oaken desk.

But little time was required in opening the desk with one of the keys, and various bundles of papers tied together with red tape, and stowed away in the many pigeon-holes, met his gaze.

He ran bundle after bundle through his hands, pausing often to listen or look over his shoulder, but he did not find what he sought.

"It isn't there," he thought, at length. "Ah! I overlooked that inner drawer!"

He fitted several keys to the drawer he had discovered, and soon opened it.

There were piles of money and papers, and a few articles of costly jewellery, that had evidently belonged to the lawyer's wife; but these Russell passed by in his hasty search, and soon discovered a large buff envelope, labelled: "The Last Will and Testament of John Willis."

The villain's eyes sparkled with fiendish delight as he seized and examined it.

He drew the will given him by his aunt from his breast-pocket, and minutely compared the two documents.

They were exactly similar in outward appearance, save that the last was tied with red tape.

It was easy to remove the strings from one to the other, and the villain then changed them, placing the true will in his pocket.

He placed everything as he had found it, re-locked the drawer and the desk, turned off his light, and left the office, locking the door behind him.

There was a wild exultation in his manner as he crept cautiously around the house, and peered again into the room in which he had seen the lawyer.

He sat there yet, but was now rubbing his eyes, and evincing an inclination to retire, for the watcher saw him turn down the light.

"All right!" muttered Russell. "He has no suspicion of burglars, and I haven't left a trace of my visit! Now for home and wealth!"

He went back to the boat and rowed softly up the stream.

With a chuckle of satisfaction he hastened homeward, and soon reached the boat-house, which he unlocked and entered, rowing in, and closing the door behind him.

He secured the boat, glanced cautiously around the dark room, and then turned on his light and drew out the will, tearing it open, and regarding it with a devouring gaze.

"That reads well," he muttered; "gives half a million to Esther! Ah! would that she were mine!"

He gloated over the document a little while, and then mused: "I shall exact all that aunt has promised, and shall not give up the will. If I let her burn it to-night, it is possible I might have to whistle for my fifty thousand. Moreover," and his black eyes flashed, "I have long entertained love for Esther, and would have proposed to her had she not been so devoted to Harry Moreland. Let her be convinced that he deserts her in her poverty—that she is houseless, homeless, and friendless—that she has not a penny to keep her from starvation—and a few delicate attentions from me would win her consent to a marriage with me. I can then produce the will and take possession of our wealth."

He gave way for a few moments to his delight, and then continued:

"I may have some difficulties to encounter, but I shall triumph. I must make trouble between them, and then induce her to marry. And I can and shall do it."

Calming his wild emotions and resuming his natural quietness, he went to the house, entering by the door by which he had left, and hastening to look for his aunt and cousin.

He found them waiting for him.

"Have you got it?" cried Mrs. Willis, eagerly, on his entrance, as she sprang up to meet him. "Oh, Pierre, did you succeed?"

The villain drew the will from his pocket, handing it to her, yet keeping hold of it.

The delighted woman hastily scanned it, and then handed her nephew a well-filled purse, saying:

"There are your two thousand, Pierre. I am now rich—rich!"

"The first thing we do, mother," said Ellnor, joyfully, "must be to rid ourselves of Esther. She can go out teaching; she shan't live with me."

"Yes, we're revenged on her!" said Mrs. Willis, with gleaming eyes. "Her father has always made us stand aside for her, and we will now thrust her from our path. He spoke of her handsome position; I wonder what portion she'll have now? I rejoice over her dark future."

Russell smiled—a smile that was full of menace to the rightful heiress whom he had robbed, and full of anticipated triumph for the future.

"And now you've got your pay, Pierre," said Mrs. Willis, after further rejoicings, "let me burn the will."

"Not so," interrupted her nephew, folding the document and putting it in his pocket. "If you burn it, what hold have I on you for the fifty thousand? You need not be afraid of me, but really I must keep it awhile."

"You know I'm good for the money, Pierre," cried his aunt, in alarm. "Suppose you should lose it? Or, suppose you should die away from me and it should be found on your person?"



"Oh, I shan't do either of these things," was his reply. "You needn't worry about it. You may depend that I shall guard it carefully."

Hard as it was, Mrs. Willis was forced to acquiesce in this arrangement; when she and Elinor had exhausted all their powers of persuasion to no purpose.

"Well, have your own way, Pierre," she said; "only be sure that you do not lose the will. Our interest is yours; you know. We are in one boat!"

"Of course," replied Russell, with a quiet smile of satisfaction, "of course!"

A few further observations were made, consisting mostly of rejoicings over Esther, and purposes for the future, and Elinor then arose, saying that she was tired and sleepy, and withdrew to her sleeping apartment.

Russell listened until she was beyond hearing, and then exchanged a glance of deep meaning with his aunt, as he whispered:

"The only remaining necessity in the case is for Mr. Willis to take a speedy departure to a more congenial climate. Every day that he lives it will be possible for him to send for the will, to see that all is right, and so detect our little arrangement. To make us secure in our possessions, he ought to drop off forthwith—the sooner the better."

"Just so," replied Mrs. Willis, in a husky whisper. "We must get rid of him! They say that a sudden pressure on the chest of a person far gone with consumption—such as a knee or hand can readily give—may be made instantly fatal, and leave no sign of violence. Or, couldn't we drop a subtle poison into his medicine? Let me see if Esther is with him."

She gave Russell a glance, through which the demon of murder seemed to regard him, and stole noiselessly toward the chamber of her husband.

#### CHAPTER V.

Seems she a dove? Her feathers are but borrowed.

For she's disposed as the evil raven.

Seems she a lamb? Her skin is surely lent her.

For she's inclined as are the ravening wolves.

Who cannot steal a shape. *Shakespeare.*

As Mrs. Willis, moving on tip-toe, neared her husband's chamber, she heard voices within. Realizing that Mr. Willis had awakened from his slumbers, and that Esther was still with him, she paused to listen, as had lately been her custom on such occasions.

"You have slept well, dear father?" she heard Esther saying.

"Yes, but I am deathly weak. I am nearing the end. For days I have retained my hold upon life by the slightest of threads."

The difficulty and slowness with which these few words were uttered added to their painful effect upon Esther, who remained silent.

Mrs. Willis merely smiled.

The dying man soon roused himself, and spoke of Barry, of Esther's prospects, of the will he had left with his lawyers, and of the various other topics upon which his thoughts naturally rested at that moment.

He repeated some of his late injunctions, again advising Esther to rid herself of her stepmother and Elinor, and have nothing to do with them.

When he again paused from exhaustion, Mrs. Willis again smiled.

The expression of her face was full of triumphant malice, and showed that she was already counting upon the complete success of her schemes.

In truth, the game was in her hands.

She remembered the changed wills, and realized that Mr. Willis and Esther were all unaware and even unsuspecting of the coming blow.

"Well, child, you must go to bed now," finally said Mr. Willis, again arousing himself. "You have been up too much lately, and will be ill if you do not take more rest."

"Let me watch with you till morning," was her response. "I am strong—"

"No, no, dear," interrupted the affectionate parent. "You need rest. If I should need you I will ring the bell."

He referred to a bell which he had had hung in Esther's sleeping-room, connected with a cord that lay on his pillow, in order to summon her whenever he wanted her.

Anticipating Esther's withdrawal, Mrs. Willis concealed herself in a small closet near the door of the chamber.

Esther insisted upon remaining, but was overruled by her father, who said:

"No, you must get a good night's rest, child. If I want you I will ring."

The girl took a tender leave of her parent, and then withdrew from the room, closing the door behind her, and going to her own apartment.

Mrs. Willis waited a few moments before venturing from her place of concealment, and then glided to Esther's door, where she waited until assured that the girl had lain down to sleep; and then, with a look of

anticipated triumph, she returned to her husband's chamber, and effected a noiseless entrance.

The sick man was lying back on his pillow, his eyes closed, and his breathing faint and indistinct. A moderator lamp was placed on a table at a little distance from the bed, and filled the room with a mellow radiance.

Mrs. Willis advanced stealthily into the chamber and stood by the side of her husband, with a murderous light in her glittering eyes, and a hard and cruel expression on her sensual lips, as she recalled what he had said about his weakness.

For a moment she listened and watched, with suspended breath, and then she took the bell-cord that lay on the pillow, and placed it beyond the sick man's reach.

The murderous light in her eyes deepened.

"The pressure of my two hands on his chest," she thought, "or a sudden shock of any kind, would be sufficient to rid me of him. He ought to be out of the way. I have been favoured thus far, and must not hesitate now."

With the soft step of a tigress creeping on its victim, she advanced to the head of the bed and lifted one of the soft pillows which the restless movements of the sick man had displaced.

How her eyes shone in the semi-darkness!

"If I could only hold it over his mouth a minute or two," her thoughts went on, as she held the pillow in her two hands, raising it against her breast, while she glared upon him. "One bold step, and all his wealth is mine! No more vexations! No more fears of going back to the old miseries!"

The temptations pressing upon the unscrupulous woman could not be resisted. She was advancing the pillow towards the face of the sleeper, and raising her knee on the side of the bed, in readiness for a sudden spring to her work of death, when, as if touched by an electric shock, or warned by an invisible friend, Mr. Willis suddenly opened his eyes—opened them wide—opened them and stared upon her with a look of unutterable horror.

The position of his wife—the pillow she held in her hand—the very fierceness of her gripe upon it—more than all else, the murderous expression of her eyes and face—told him the whole story!

A single instant he stared at her as she stood rigid and motionless before him, paralyzed in the attitude of detected guilt, and then, with a faint cry of horror, his hand sought the bell-rope—to find it gone!

The look which passed over the face of the disappointed man was terrible.

He endeavoured to rise up in bed to call Esther, but his strength suddenly failed him; he fell back heavily, muttering only an inarticulate murmur, and the next moment he was dead.

The slender thread by which he had for days held his life had snapped under the sudden shock he had experienced.

Mrs. Willis continued to hold the pillow in her hands, thinking that her husband had merely fainted; but she was quickly undeceived by the fixed and stony glare of his eyes, the rigid lines on his ghastly face, and the stiffening of his hands.

"Sure enough!" she at length whispered to herself; "he's gone!"

Replacing the pillow, she restored the bell-cord to its former position, and closed his eyes, while she involuntarily shuddered at the awful look of horror on his white, pinched features, and then she passed her hand over them, smoothing out the lines of the still face.

"It is well!" she thought, becoming calmer.

"Nothing could be better!"

While she regarded the silent figure, thinking what to do, the door softly opened, and Pierre Russell glided into the chamber.

"Ah, he's dead!" he said, in his low and gentle tones. "Tried your knee on his chest, eh, as suggested?"

He looked for signs of violence, and whispered that there were none, when Mrs. Willis responded, in a tone of satisfaction and triumph:

"No, none. He's out of the way, and the property is all mine. Call Elinor, Pierre, and then summon Esther. I must not be seen here alone, or with no one but you!"

Elinor was quietly summoned, and her mother said:

"He is dead, Elinor. Stay with me, Pierre has gone for Esther."

The mother and daughter waited a moment, and then Esther hurried into the room, in a state of mind bordering on distraction.

As no language can do justice to her sorrow, we leave the early hours of her grief to the imagination of the reader.

(To be continued.)

DECORATION OF ST. PAUL'S.—The committee are expecting from Professor Schuett the designs for two

other windows, for the apse, the gifts of the Goldsmiths' Company and Dr. Rogers. Those which have been sent over and have been approved, are said to be "powerful, quiet, and religious in character." There is every reason to expect that the first work of pictorial art in the cathedral will be Mr. Alfred Stevens's design, executed in mosaic, for one of the spandrels of the dome, of which the preliminary work has already been prepared by Sig. Salvini, at Murano: the final operation will very shortly be commenced in the cathedral.

It is a remarkable fact that one-fifth of the whole number of criminals in Newgate are supplied by the General Post Office. This is startling, and there must be some reason for it. It may be found in the wretched pay of the men—or, rather, boys.

THE ALABAMA.—It will doubtless gratify the admirers of the gallantry displayed by the officers and crew of the renowned Alabama in the late action off Cherbourg, that it has been determined to present Captain Semmes with a handsome sword, to replace that which he has buried with his sinking ship.

The inventor of the Chalmers target says he could plate ships of the Lord Warden class upon his system, and keep within the weight, thickness, and cost of the armour which has been adopted for these ships. Mr. Chalmers also guarantees that the 9 22-inch gun which sent its shot a mile through the Lord Warden target, would not, under similar circumstances, penetrate the armour which he offers to the Board of Admiralty.

The King and Queen of Holland have gone to Loo, where the anniversary of her Majesty's birth and marriage will be celebrated. As the King and Queen of Holland have been married a quarter of a century, the next anniversary of their wedding will be called the silver anniversary. The ladies of Guilders will on this occasion present the Queen with several articles of silver in commemoration of the event.

WILLIAM BEGG, a nephew of Robert Burns, died lately in Canada, aged sixty-eight. He was the son of the poet's sister Isabella, and received a liberal education, being intended for the medical profession, but owing to domestic affliction he never took out his diploma. In Canada he taught school for many years in Goderich township, until he was compelled, through physical infirmity, to retire to the retreat offered him by Dr. Colé. Mr. Begg inherited much of the peculiar genius of his family.

## THE BONDAGE OF BRANDON.

### CHAPTER XXXV.

A moment of his face  
A tablet of unutterable thoughts  
Was traced, and then it faded as it came.

*The Dream.*

DURING the time that Lady Brandon had been dreamily enjoying an existence in the country, inhaling the fresh and balmy air, healthy, bracing, and invigorating, listening to the songs of birds and tossing about the hay in the hay-fields, with the vivacity of a schoolgirl, riding through the green lanes and indulging in picnics and other excursions, while she listened to the incense that Reginald Welby poured unceasingly into her ear, which ended in her becoming his wife, William Girling had been at death's door, and he would unquestionably have crossed the threshold and passed through the spacious portals, had his palsied hand not been too weak to allow him to knock for admission.

He had suffered a relapse.

His malady had broken out again, in a more aggravated form, and when, owing to the skill and care of his physicians, he partially recovered, he became the victim of a most acute attack of rheumatism; his limbs and joints were racked with it, and the torture he underwent was too profound and searching for the power of words to express. His shrieks were heard all through the house, and Girling, never had a moment's ease unless it was bought by laudanum, or some other soporific.

In addition to his other troubles, the money which he had obtained from Lady Brandon, and upon which his family and himself had for some time subsisted, was dwindling away and melting insensibly. Mary Girling kept the strings of the purse, and for a long time she did not like to tell her husband the lamentable condition of their resources, because she did not wish to aggravate his distress, but at last the time arrived when the announcement could be staved off no longer, and she was obliged, though much against her will, to apprise him of their all-red circumstances. This intelligence increased his sufferings tenfold. He wished that heaven would be merciful to him and alleviate his pain, or, at least, permit him to use his limbs. If he could only get about once more, he knew that he could obtain money with ease and facility

from Lady Brandon, but while he lay upon his bed, a poor, palsied wretch, he was as impotent for good or ill as a crushed worm. Being a man of active habits of body and mind, he fretted at confinement like a bird who beats its wings against the bars of its cage, and only succeeds in bruising its pinions, or, after the manner of a spirited horse who champs the bit and grows angry at the restraint of the curb.

What would he not have given to be free once more?

He thought of his insolence and overweening behaviour in the days of his prosperity, and felt that his present condition was nothing more than retribution.

His bedroom was poorly furnished. There were no curtains to the bed, and none to the window, and their absence gave the room a desolate and cheerless appearance. The bed was in a corner some distance from the bed, so that to make it accessible to the invalid, Mary had to exercise her ingenuity. She bought a piece of rope and fastened it to the bell-rope, then she carried it across the room, and made fast one end of the rope to a bedpost, within easy reach of her husband's trembling hands. To such a state was Girling reduced that he could not raise himself up in bed without the assistance of a piece of cord, which was tied to the foot of the bed. His illness had made him querulous and ill-tempered. His wife's temper and disposition must have been almost angelic to endure his grumbling and continual complaints, but by exercising the most praiseworthy forbearance, she smiled when he abused her, and held her tongue when he found fault.

One day when their stock of money was reduced to a few pieces of silver, she sought her husband to ask his advice. She was prevented from working herself by an accident which had crippled one of her hands for a time. So as they were both disabled at once they were in a precarious position.

It was a fine morning in autumn. The flowers were already fading in the little bit of garden ground which led down from their cottage to the river.

The windows of the room were closely fastened. Girling had once, in a paroxysm of rage at an imaginary draught, caused them to be nailed down. A table stood by the bedside, garnished with pials, oranges, a little brandy, a few weekly papers, and a magazine. Girling groaned as his wife approached him. She had inadvertently left the door open, and he said in a hoarse but feeble voice:

"The door! Shut the door."

He wore a night-cap, which caused his shrunken skin, from which the flesh had fallen, to show out more prominently on the protruding bones. A four days' beard grew rankly on his chin, and was not conducive to his personal beauty. When the door was closed he gave utterance to a series of groans which would have done honour to a dying savage.

His wife knew that he often pretended to be worse than he really was, so that he might exact sympathy from her and commiseration, which was a sort of food upon which he liked to feed.

When he had done groaning, he began to writhe about the bed in sinuous contortions, and then he whined like a mutinous soldier under punishment who has exhausted himself in crying out during the first part of his flogging, and who is only able to protest feebly towards its close.

Mary sat down on a chair. She had witnessed the whole thing so often before that it had very little effect upon her. At last Girling murmured in gasping accents:

"Rope—rope!"

She gave him the cord attached to the end of the bedstead, and he attempted to pull himself up with it, but whether he was too weak, or whether he wished to play upon his poor wife's feelings, it is difficult to say, but he fell back after making three ineffectual attempts to raise himself to a sitting posture.

Mary placed her hand behind his back and pushed him up as well as she was able. During this ordeal he poured forth a pitiful volley of groans—deep, base, hollow-sounding groans. He had no sooner achieved this position by the help of his wife, than he uttered a shriek such as was calculated to startle any one with nerves that were not made of cast iron, and driving his hand beneath the bedclothes seized his right knee. His features were convulsed with an expression of intense pain.

"Oh, oh!" he cried, catching his breath as he spoke, "oh—oh—oh!"

Mary looked on sympathisingly, and asked if she could do anything for him. He did not reply for some minutes, during which time he uttered the most piteous exclamations, and occasionally grated his teeth together as if he did not fit his mouth and he wanted to file them down the fraction of an inch, or to dispose of some quantity of dental ivory still more infinitesimal.

Presently William Girling withdrew his hand, and held on to the rope with the tenacity of despair. He grinned with pain, until his lips parted and his gums

were left bare, and still that dreadful grating sound, that sent a thrill to the marrow of your bones, fell upon the receding tympanum of the offended ear.

Mary shuddered.

She found her cross very heavy to carry, but her faith was placed on a rock that has endured for ages, and she believed that if she did her duty in this world she should have her reward hereafter.

This creed was her only consolation.

"Does it pain you much now, dear?" asked Mary, in a soothing voice.

"Oh, yes—it's awful! Oh—oh—I can't bear it! It's like fiends tearing all the flesh off my bones with red-hot pincers; oh, oh!"

Mary propped him up with some pillows, and gave him some medicine; he drank it with chattering teeth and quivering flesh. A pause in the pain set in. It was to him what the lucid moment is to the madman, or the oasis in the desert to the thirsty wayfarer. Mary told him how she was situated, and he said in a steady voice:

"I can do nothing. We must go to the parish, I suppose. Were I well it would be different; but—oh—oh!"

"What is it, dear?" asked Mary, solicitously.

"A passing twinge; it's gone now. I do not know what to do, I'm sure. If it were not for my illness, things should not be like this; but you see how helpless I am: I can do positively nothing. Heaven help us!"

Mary was unable to talk to him any more, for another paroxysm came on and she was so worn out and broken-hearted that she left the room, and going down-stairs took counsel and communed with herself. The more she thought of their desperate condition the more perplexed she was. Her injured hand precluded the possibility of her augmenting the funds of the family, and her husband was in so wretched a state that it was a chance whether he would live or not.

She leaned forward and placed her elbow upon the table, and least her face upon her hand, and she sat in that position for a long, long time. The dinner hour came and went. The two boys returned from the school to which they went, and finding that their mother was abstracted they feared to rouse her, and going to the cupboard they dined on some bread and a scrap of bacon. After this repast—frugal and wholesome if not dainty—which they washed down with a glass of cold water, they went back to school, wondering what the matter was, and why their mother who was usually so kind and so attentive, was now so pre-occupied and apparently indifferent to everything, even the welfare of her own children. At four o'clock they returned and found their mother still in the same position. Her arm must have been cramped, but her mind was so full that she did not think of physical inconveniences. Like a martyr at the stake she could at that moment have smiled, though the cruel, relentless flames were winding round her body.

Suddenly William Girling's bell rang violently.

She roused herself from her reverie with a start, and walked mechanically up-stairs. She found Girling rolling about in the bed, complaining, in his usual hoarse voice, of awful spasms, and calling frantically for brandy. She heard his request and without making any reply went down again. She did not speak to the children. Her face was stony and impassive. She resembled an animated statue. One of the boys said in a timid voice:

"Mother, where are you going?"

She looked at him vacantly and made no answer. He was afraid to repeat his question, because, as he remarked to his brother:

"Mother looked so odd."

Mary put on her bonnet and went out. She walked moodily along the streets of Richmond in a purposeless manner, occasionally jingling a couple of shillings together. She held them in her hand and cherished them, perhaps, because they were the last of their kind which fortune had allowed her to retain. She had not gone far before she overtook a gaily-dressed lady who was wandering in a listless way amongst the best streets, and looking at the different articles displayed in the windows. All at once something caught her eye in a haberdasher's shop, and she went in to buy it. Mary Girling watched her and stopped to look at the mantles and shawls.

The lady soon came out holding something in her hand, but she had not gone far before she dropped her purse. She had intended to put it in her pocket, but she had missed the aperture and let it fall upon the pavement.

Mary hardly knowing what she was doing, darted forward and stooping down with great rapidity, picked it up, and secured it about her person. She looked round after this to see if anyone had remarked the act of which she had been guilty. She fancied that every eye was fixed upon her. The lady passed on, utterly unconscious of the loss which she had just sustained. Mary thought that it would be prudent for her to endeavour to make her escape if possible. Accordingly, she

turned her back on the lady, and walked quickly away in an opposite direction, but she had not gone a dozen yards before a heavy hand fell roughly upon her shoulder, and a harsh voice exclaimed:

"Not so fast, my lady; you and I must have a word or two together before we part."

She looked up scared and terrified.

Her eyes met those of a policeman.

His grasp tightened, and her soul sank within her as she realized the fact that she was in the power of the law, and a prisoner in the hands of one of its myrmidons.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

Ay, but hearken, sir, though the chameleon love can feed on the air, I am one that am nourished by my victuals, and would fain have meat. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*

GREAT was the expectation excited by the rising of Sir Lawrence Allingford. It was clearly a great breach of politeness on his part to anticipate Reginald Welby, whose undoubted right it was to return thanks for the honour that had just been done his wife. The ladies and gentlemen, who sat around the Earl of Brandon's hospitable board, closely packed like precious stones upon the surface of a ring, looked at him with manifest surprise, and although no audible remarks were made, the indignant glances which flashed from more than one eye, indicated that the brilliant assemblage would have infinitely preferred to hear Welby speak than the baronet. With the former they were for the most part acquainted—of the latter they knew nothing. The earl, of course, recognized Sir Lawrence, but like his guests, he was at a loss to understand his motive in rising so abruptly and supplanting the bridegroom, who sat perfectly still, looking very blank and angry.

Mimi's eyes brightened up and sparkled with a forcible splendour. She thought that the hour had arrived when Lady Brandon would be crushed and annihilated in the eyes of all those who had been that day bidden by the earl her brother to the banquet. She had not any suspicion of the terrible facts of which the baronet's heart was a depository, but she imagined that he knew something derogatory to Blanche's honour and integrity, and she hoped and prayed, with all the glowing fervour of a revengeful soul that knows not how to spare or to forgive, that he would at once of mercy and of charity, that he would in his desperation launch his most fatal shafts at the pale and shrinking woman, who looked so like a corpse in her awful pallor as she sat still and motionless on the right of the earl.

Her ladyship was confounded at seeing Sir Lawrence at the wedding-breakfast. Had it been anywhere else that fate destined them to meet, she would not have cared so much; but to be exposed, attacked, calumniated, held up to reproach and execration before all her friends, relatives, and acquaintances was more than she could bear. She marked well the quivering of Sir Lawrence's lip, his haggard face, his lack-lustre eye, and his trembling hand; these signs portended great internal agitation. He evidently knew all, he was certified of her union with another, and she might expect to feel the effects of his scathing vengeance. Had he sought her when alone, she could have borne his reproaches and smiled at his threats of denunciation, but now the case was altered. She felt like a culprit put upon her trial—all those around her were the jury to pronounce a verdict upon the evidence which Sir Lawrence Allingford was, like a public prosecutor, about to lay before them.

She regarded her ring affectionately, and remembered with a feeling of satisfaction that it contained the deadly crystal, from which, in her extremity, she always hoped so much. She thought, too, of the astrologer, and his prediction that ten years were to elapse before the day of her death arrived and the sun dawned on her last hours on earth, and she tried to comfort herself with the reflection that the astrologer spoke the truth, and that her enemies would not prevail against her for a long time to come.

Reginald Welby caught Mimi's eye fixed upon him, and he could not help noticing the almost supernatural light which burned in them; at the same instant some one close to him said in an undertone:

"Sir Lawrence Allingford! I have heard the name. Oh, yes! it was the man who was engaged to Lady Brandon before she met Welby."

"Ah, indeed!" said another, "that fully accounts for her ladyship's pallor. Look at her! Did you ever see anyone so ghastly, and so unearthly?"

Reginald now in his turn became pale, the blood stagnated in his veins, and his heart as nearly as possible stopped beating.

So Mimi was right after all! She had only warned him of a danger which was patent to her superior sagacity, but which his duller perceptions refused to credit. The letter she had shown him possessed more meaning than he was disposed to ascribe to it. At that moment, when he ought to have been on his legs telling the guests at the wedding-table that "it was



the proudest moment of his life," he sat as motionless as his statue-like bride, biting his lips, and cowering into himself like some wretch at the mercy of his conqueror, expecting the cold steel to penetrate his breast at any moment.

Sir Lawrence, meanwhile, was not ignorant of the commotion he was exciting; but he was himself quite as perturbed as any of those who expected to be his auditors. He endeavoured to speak, but although he made several attempts to do so, the words obstinately refused to pass his lips, but hung back in his throat. The thoughts to which he wished to give force and being fluttered about the chambers of his brain, but would not venture into the outer world. A big lump rose up in his throat. He stretched out his hand; he was conscious of a feeling of suffocation; the guests, the dishes, the *epaves*, the viands, floated before his eyes indistinctly, like so many black specks, shapeless and undefined—he uttered a smothered cry, and fell back into the arms of the Count de Cannes.

A great uproar immediately ensued. Everybody talked at once. Lady Brandon heaved a deep sigh of relief, and the colour returned to her cheeks. Reginald also felt thankful, although he did not know why, but he had a vague idea that the catastrophe which had just happened had spared him a humiliating trial.

De Cannes carried the baronet into the hall and laid him on his back upon the oilcloth near the front door, so that the grateful and refreshing breeze might play upon his face. He hastily unfastened his shirt-collar, so as to permit him to breathe freely.

The Earl of Brandon thought that Sir Lawrence had succumbed to the heat, to an attack of sunstroke, or to some peculiar malady to which he was subject. He begged his guests not to move, and sent his butler out to see how he was progressing.

Webster came back with the cheering intelligence that he had opened his eyes, and that his friend, the Count de Cannes, begged to assure his lordship that he expected he would be himself again in a short space of time, but he hoped that he might be excused for not coming back into the breakfast-room.

Mimi slipped away from the table without being perceived, and joined the Count de Cannes in the hall. A rapid greeting passed between them.

"You are well?" said the count.

"Me! Oh, I am the same as ever."

"You cannot help being charming," said the count, with a smile.

"Compliments between you and me are worse than absurd," cried Mimi, angrily. "Take this man upstairs. I want to—"

"Have the charge of him?" queried De Cannes.

"Never mind. Do as I tell you."

The count beckoned to one of the servants and said:

"Take Sir Lawrence Allingford upstairs, and let him be placed in some spare bedroom."

The count and Mimi followed. When they arrived at the room, the count said:

"You are going to stay here?"

"Certainly."

"When men's minds are deranged, they talk unguardedly, eh, my beautiful Mimi? Is it not delightful that we should understand each other so thoroughly?"

Mimi frowned.

"I shall have something to say to you at another time and in another place. I suppose you have no intention of leaving Kirkdale Priory just yet?"

"Not the remotest," replied the count. "I have, as you may surmise, accompanied my friend, Sir Lawrence Allingford—who, by the way, would be a very good fellow if he had, not an affair of the heart—into the country, with the intention of rusticating. Lo and behold! I kill two very fine birds with one slender, not to say diminutive, pabble. I rusticate, and see my dear Mimi, which is the greatest pleasure that fate, in its munificence, could have vouchsafed to me."

"You need not stop here—I can attend to your friend," said Mimi.

"Such is not my intention," returned De Cannes, coolly. "Not even thy peerless attraction, O incomparable Mimi, could induce me to forget the pleasures of fashionable society, a marriage in high life, and champagne."

The governess made some impatient remark, and brushing rudely past him, went into the bedroom, and rang the bell for an attendant.

The Count de Cannes descended the stairs, and once more entered the breakfast-room. All was rampant hilarity again. Champagne, hock, and Moselle flowed like water. The episode of the swoon of Sir Lawrence was already forgotten by the joyous guests.

At length the bride and bridegroom retired to dress for their journey. They were to drive to the railway station, pass through London, and start for the continent that night.

Lady Blanche looked ravishingly beautiful as she walked along, amidst audible remarks of admiration; but it was observed that both herself and Reginald were very moody and thoughtful.

Reginald looked like an angel who has caught a fine fish, but who has hurt his finger with the hook in landing it. Lady Brandon resembled the fine fish, who naturally panted for its native element again.

The carriage which was to convey them to the station appeared in front of the house. The luggage had all been taken into the yard, and strapped on the top of the carriage, so that everything was in readiness. All the new-married couple had to do was to embark, and then they were fairly launched upon the unexplored branch of the river of life which they had elected to traverse together. They knew that the stream was full of rapids and of shallows, of rocks and of sand-banks, of eddies and dangerous currents, and that nothing could save their frail bark from destruction but skilful steering. They would have to take the helm alternately. Would their eyes be sure and their hands steady?

They took leave of their intimate friends. Alice Welby cried, and so did the rest of the bridesmaids, as in duty bound, for tears are *la mode* on such interesting occasions; but while their grief was fictitious, and pumped up from the reservoir at a moment's notice—fortunately the mains were in good working order and the supply copious—Alice's sorrow was genuine, for she loved her brother, and was grieved to part with him.

The last moment arrived. Reginald handed his wife into the carriage, and followed her. She held her handkerchief to her eyes.

Mrs. Cob, the housekeeper, stood by with an old shoe in her hand, her arm was uplifted, and like a gunner with the match in his hand, she was ready for business. The Earl of Brandon and Mr. and Mrs. Welby, senior, pressed round the carriage to wish them good-bye. Many a hearty "God bless you!" saluted their ears.

The carriage began to move. A loud cheer arose and was taken up by hundreds of voices.

The roar was deafening. Mrs. Cob hurled the old shoe with all her force after the retreating carriage, which was soon going along the avenue at a spanking pace, the postilion spurring his horses.

The largest of the triumphal arches was passed. The carriage was out of sight, but still the cheering was borne faintly upon the wings of the wind. Those at the extremity of the park took up the tumultuous applause, and amid the unanimous good wishes of an immense concourse of people, Reginald Welby bore away his young and blushing bride.

A singular incident took place just as the wheels of the carriage began to grate on the gravel.

A window in the upper part of the house was pushed open, and a man endeavoured to throw himself from it, but was restrained by other and more powerful arms and dragged back again.

Hearing the scuffle, the Count de Cannes, who was standing on the lawn, looked up and recognized Sir Lawrence Allingford. He walked slowly into the house, went upstairs and met Mimi coming down.

"Well?" he exclaimed.

"He would not move until the last moment, when it was too late," replied Mimi. "Although I tried everything, I could not induce him to so much as stir his little finger, but when the people began to shout and the carriage drove off, he tried to throw himself from the window. I saved him from himself, but chance has once more defeated me."

"Never mind, you will win next time," replied the count, gaily. "Come with me, let us take a stroll in the delightful walks of this lovely priory. It is long since we met, and we have, consequently, much to talk about."

"I suppose I cannot do anything at present?" said Mimi, inquiringly.

"With Sir Lawrence?"

"Yes."

"I am afraid not. How is he?"

"He exhausted himself just now, and he has fallen into a profound slumber."

"That has happened opportunely. I should leave him to recover himself. It will be time enough to-morrow to take action in the matter."

"So I was thinking."

"Will you walk?" said De Cannes.

"I have no objection."

"Where shall we go?"

"Where you like," replied Mimi.

"You must be my guide. You forget I am a stranger within your gates."

Mimi and the Count de Cannes left the talkative crowd as soon as they were able, and wandered into the cool and still shrubberies, looking like a couple of conspirators.

As long as Reginald and Lady Blanche were within the precincts of the Priory park, their time was fully occupied in acknowledging the bows and salutations of the peasantry, who would have been sadly disappointed had they not shown themselves at the windows of the carriage; but when they reached the turnpike road they were able to turn their attention to one another, and realize the mighty fact that they were man and wife.

Man and wife! What an amount of responsibility, what a weight of duty, the phrase conveys!

Lady Brandon held a small basket upon her knee. Reginald asked her what it contained. She opened it, and he saw a young squirrel lying on a piece of cider down.

It was the one he had made her a present of in the early days of their love.

"Do you not know it again?" she said, smiling sweetly.

He was silent.

"You gave it to me," she continued.

"Oh, to be sure!" he cried; "I remember now. I knocked it over with a stone when we were going through the wood. It was the first time I ever saw you, dearest; and it is possible that you can have kept the squirrel ever since? That is very kind of you. How can I repay your kindness?"

"I have kept it because I love it," replied Lady Blanche.

It was strange how like an angel this woman could look when it was her wish to appear innocent and simple-minded.

Reginald Welby could not help feeling madly in love with his wife. He forgot Sir Lawrence Allingford's letter, he allowed everything that was prejudicial to her ladyship to fade from his memory; he dismissed his suspicions, and was her slave, humble and abject, submissive and lowly. There was not one single thing that he, in the delirium of his love, would not have done for her.

"Will you always love me, dearest Blanche?" he asked, as he tenderly held her hand in his own.

"Always, to you," "Always" may be a long time, but if it were centuries, Reginald, I could never cease loving you. Once I thought I could not love you, but lately I find that I was mistaken. I have tried to love you, and I have succeeded."

Was she really in earnest—or was she merely deceiving him for her own purposes? Those who are acquainted with her character will most probably say the latter.

He endeavoured to thank her, but his heart was too full for utterance. The carriage drove up to the station, and in less than five minutes an express train was whirling them at the rate of forty miles an hour to London. And when the happy pair arrived there Reginald was still dreaming, still madly joyful, still as unsuspecting as a child.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

He paused—no sound  
Broke from within, and all was night around.

By those that deepest feel is ill expressed.

The indistinctness of the suffering breast,  
When thousand thoughts begin and end in one,  
Which seeks from all the refuge found in none,  
No words suffice the secret soul to show,  
Far truth denies all eloquence to won.

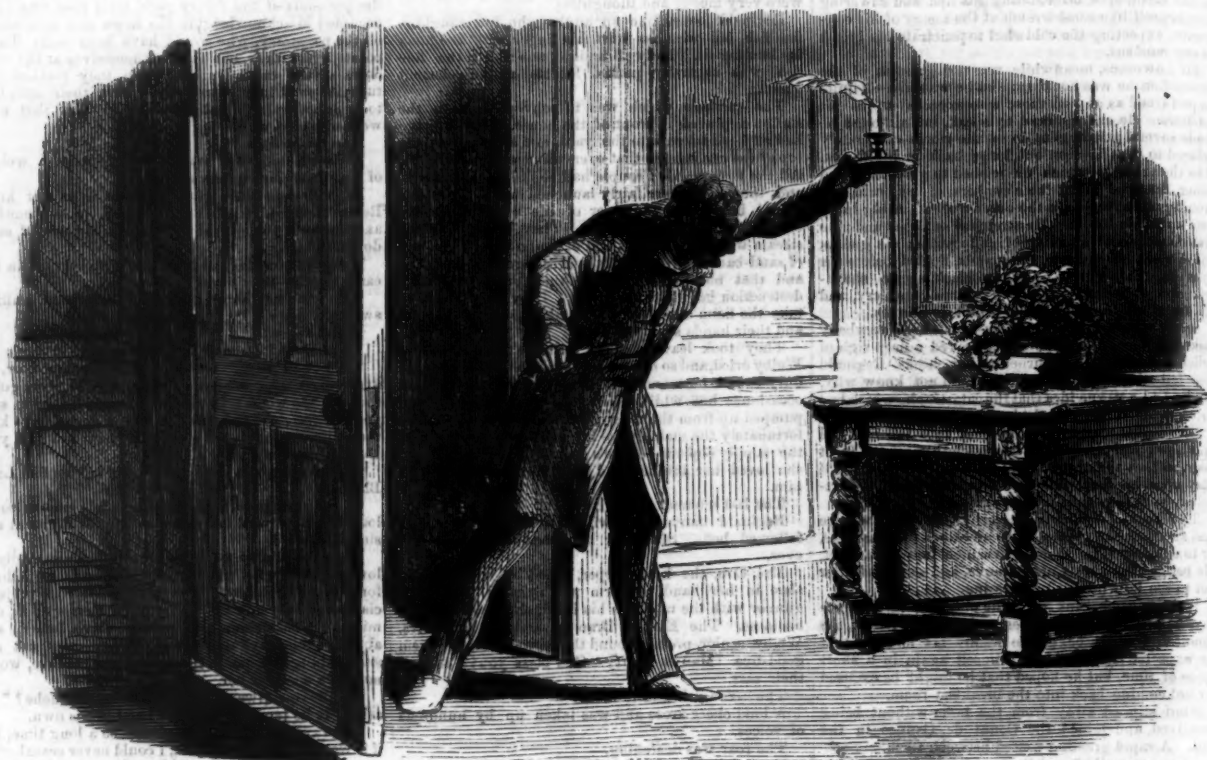
THE next day Sir Lawrence Allingford was himself again. His temporary weakness had passed away, and he was burning for revenge upon the perfidious woman by whom he considered he had been treated with the greatest cruelty. Now she was lost to him as it seemed for ever, he felt how much he loved her; he was conscious of the unaltered affection which had during his exile been slumbering in his breast locked up and not allowed to illumine the surface.

It is too much to say that his affection turned to hatred, but he wished that it was in his power to be signally revenged upon Blanche in an indirect manner. If, for instance, he could have made away with Reginald, so as leave her without a protector, or if he could manage to find them out, in whatever far-off clime they might be spending their honeymoon, and make such revelations to Reginald as would cause him to leave her on the instant, and make her a wife without a husband, dependent on the scant mercy of the world, he would have been satisfied. He went about the Priory with his head hanging down and his eyes fixed intently upon the ground, as if he were in deep thought. He was like a mathematician engaged in the solution of a difficult problem, which could not be solved without an immense amount of trouble and toil was lavished upon it.

On the evening of the day of the marriage Mimi said to De Cannes:

"He takes it very quietly."

"I do not think so," replied the count.



[THE COUNT ACTS MYSTERIOUSLY.]

"But he makes no sign."  
 "I am willing to admit that."  
 "Is it not proof presumptive then of his tameness?"  
 "Not in the least; he is one of those quiet men who will rather die than be demonstrative. I know him better than you do. He is not like you, Mimi. He has not the fiery blood of the wild beast in his veins, that boiling current which will not be still, which will lead its possessor into acts of extravagance."

Mimi laughed.  
 "For my part," continued the count, "I believe he suffers acutely."

"Do you think he is like a train of gunpowder, which only awaits the coming of the match to burst into an explosion?" said Mimi, who was fond of allegories and figurative speeches.

"I certainly do."  
 "If so, he shall not wait long for the match," said Mimi, with a self-congratulatory look, as if she were conscious of her strength.

It was about seven o'clock in the evening. The twilight was just commencing. The sun had been extinguished, as it were, by dark banks of clouds which obscured the surface of the horizon. The wind whistled shrilly through the trees. An indescribable feeling of melancholy fell on all around, and even the Count de Cannes, who was perturbed at nothing, fell under its influence.

At a bend in the walk they came upon Sir Lawrence, who was so much preoccupied that he almost ran against his friends. The count introduced him to Mimi, who placed herself by his side, and began to talk to him in the seductive manner in which she was so well versed.

Sir Lawrence was like an iceberg when he met the Count de Cannes, but under this sun of Mimi he began to thaw. Mimi began gradually to broach the subject which occupied all her thoughts. She told Sir Lawrence that she was perfectly well aware that it was rude in the extreme for her to talk to him about his private affairs, which, however, were matter of conversation amongst many people in the county.

"The Count de Cannes," she said, "has told me that you are still passionately attached to Lady Blanche Brandon, and it was rumoured in—shire some time ago that you were about to be married to her."

As she talked of marriage the baronet shuddered. It made him think what Blanche might have been to him, but what it was impossible that she ever could be now.

"Lady Brandon always seemed to dread you, Sir Lawrence," continued Mimi.

"And well she might," he replied, "unguardedly; I know that about her which would make her sleep uneasily did she but think it was being bruited abroad."

"Indeed! In that case she is in your power?"

"Completely so."

"Why do you not use that power to make her repent the step she has taken?"

"Because—" he began.

"Ah!" she interrupted, "pardon me; I forgot that you were still in love with her."

"I did not say so."

"You have little reason to love her. She has treated you with the greatest unkindness, I may say with the utmost barbarity."

"What you say is very true," put in the Count de Cannes; "but our friend here is unfortunately sentimental, and believes in the forgiveness of injuries."

"That," said Mimi, sanctimoniously, "should be a universal rule; but although I do not approve of people crying out for vengeance, I think it is very just that those who do wrong should be punished. Mankind are frequently the instruments of a higher power. Now, Sir Lawrence Allingford says he is acquainted with the secret history of Lady Brandon. If so, what is to prevent his making use of the power with which this invests him?"

"Nothing, that I can see," remarked de Cannes.

Sir Lawrence did not speak, but he seemed to be listening intently to every word which fell from Mimi, and to be subsequently pondering it all in his heart.

"If I were in your friend's place, count," resumed Mimi, "I should follow a woman who had deceived me to the end of the world. When I met her I would accuse her of her perfidy, and if it was in my power to do so I would endeavour to separate her from the man she had the presumption to like better than myself. I have known Reginald Welby for years, and I am perfectly convinced that if he was apprised of any passage in the life of Lady Brandon, which reflected discredit upon her, and disqualified her for holding a respectable position in society, he would say that she was unworthy of being his wife, and he would drive her from him. I should not have thrown out this suggestion, Sir Lawrence," she added, "had you not looked so woebegone."

"Your advice is not at all bad," said de Cannes.

"I am much obliged to you," replied Sir Lawrence.

"I will think of what you have been saying."

"Then you are," exclaimed Mimi, "both of you, idle men. What is to prevent you from travelling about in search of the bride and bridegroom? The

chase, I fancy, would prove exciting. For my part, I should think that playing the part of an amateur detective the most thoroughly enjoyable thing in the world."

The little party reached the Priory, and Mimi found Alice Welby waiting on the steps for her. She was on the point of going back to her father's house. She had come over to talk to the earl, who felt very lonely.

Mimi shook the Count de Cannes by the hand, and was tripping lightly away, when the count said:

"You are positive about what you tell me?"

"Quite," was the reply.

Alice and Mimi walked along the road a short distance, and then struck across the fields, taking a short-cut. They were accompanied by a cousin of Alice's, who was staying with them.

The bedrooms occupied by Sir Lawrence Allingford and the Count de Cannes adjoined one another, so that the count could smoke in his friend's apartment, or Sir Lawrence could while away an hour or so in friendly conversation in that of De Cannes.

That night the count directed Mr. Webster, the butler, to bring him some champagne. Sir Lawrence came into his room, and they drank several glasses together, talking about the proposition that Mimi had thrown out, and wondering whether it would be advisable to take her advice.

The count was strongly in favour of doing so, and Sir Lawrence did not contradict him or flatly refuse to do so, although he did not immediately acquiesce.

When the baronet had retired to his room, the different clocks in the Priory struck the hour of two.

The darkness was profound.

Pushing open his door, the Count de Cannes stepped out upon the landing. Everything was perfectly still and quiet. The grave could not have been stiller. Death could not have been quieter.

Going back to his apartment, the count buttoned his coat tightly under his chin. Then he opened a little box which was hidden away in a corner of his portmanteau, and took from it a small black mask.

He put it on his face and fastened it behind his head. It had the effect of thoroughly disguising him. He then took from another part of his portmanteau a small pistol, exquisitely worked and put together. It was a revolver with three chambers. Armed with this, he took off his boots and stepped lightly once more on to the landing. He held a candle in his hand, and the light traced his shadow upon the oaken panelling.

It was a fantastic artist, for the portrait was weird and ghostlike.

(To be continued.)





## ALL ALONE.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "Self-Made," &amp;c. &amp;c.

## CHAPTER X

## RED RIDGE FARM.

I see men's judgments are  
A parcel of their fortunes; and things outward  
Do draw the inward quality after them,  
To suffer all alike. *Shakespeare.*

RED RIDGE FARM had been in the possession of the Wyldes family for years, but from some cause or another the family had never prospered.

Reckless extravagance had made them homeless adventurers in their own country.

In every generation they regularly ruined themselves, and then, by a fortunate marriage, a prize in the lottery, or an unexpected legacy, came up all right again.

Wild and dissolute as the family had been for generations, they had always been almost universal favourites, not so much because they wasted their substance in entertaining and feasting their friends, but because, in addition to these hospitable qualities, they possessed other highly popular social gifts.

They had unfailing spirits, always joyous—never cast down, even when their fortunes were at the worst.

Wit and humour ran in the family, while ostentation and ill-temper were unknown.

It may be readily understood that living the life the Wyldes had lived, each successive generation degenerated as much in person and in intellect as in wealth, social influence, and power.

Every plunge into ruin became deeper, and the chance of recovery fainter.

The last lineal descendant of this family at the time our story commences was Basil Wyldes.

He was not only the poorest of all his line, but he was also the dullest in intellect, and the plainest in personal appearance.

He was still a minor, being but nineteen years of age; but though both his parents were dead, there was no reason why he should hurry himself to attain his legal majority, since he had nothing to inherit.

Even the home of his forefathers was no longer his.

It had been mortgaged to Colonel Denby, and the mortgage had been foreclosed.

The family of the Wyldes were only tenants of Red Ridge Farm.

## WATCHED.

Even that might not have been their lot, but for the business talent, energy, and perseverance of Basil's grandmother, old Mrs. Wyldes.

For a long time in previous generations she had averted ruin from the house.

At last, however, when a spendthrift son, following in the steps of a spendthrift husband, had completed the household wreck by mortgaging the farm, breaking the heart of his wife, and drinking himself to death, it did not crush this brave woman, who, although far advanced in years, left the grave of her last son to begin the world anew, for the sake of her grandchildren, Basil and Helen.

She toiled hard for their sakes.

She superintended personally all the working of the farm, and year by year not only paid the rent, but managed to lay by something as well.

To see the farm once more in the possession of the family was the great end and aim for which she strove.

She had extracted a promise from Colonel Denby that he would re-sell them Red Ridge for the amount he had advanced upon it and the interest, and to obtain the required sum she bent all her energies.

Basil's sister, Helen, or as she was usually called, Nelly, has already been mentioned as the friend of Theodora.

It was strange that that pale, wistful-eyed girl should have selected two beings so thoroughly antagonistic in their natures as Nelly Wyldes and Genevieve Lenoir to be her two greatest friends.

Yet such was the case.

Nelly was small and thin almost to emaciation.

Her skin was pale and dark, nearly to pipsy darkness.

Her hair was jet black, lustrous, long and straight as an Indian's, and hung down over her shoulders, reaching below her waist.

Her eyebrows, also of a jetty blackness, arched over a pair of eyes in piquant contrast to her whole complexion.

Those eyes were light-grey generally, yet of no permanently fixed colour, being, in gladness or excitement, bright and sparkling, now blue, now grey, now green, as springing about from object to object they flashed rays of light wherever they fell; or in sadness or thought, under the deep veil of their drooping lids and long dark lashes, they smouldered into a dull, uncertain brown or black.

This was Helen Wyldes, a weird and witching little fairy, who lived with Basil and her grandmother at Red Ridge farm.

But there were other inhabitants at this old farmhouse.

Miss Wyldes, or Miss Elizabeth as she was usually called, a maiden lady of fifty years of age, a sister of the late husband of old Mrs. Wyldes, lived there, and so did Miss Nelly Parrott, a middle-aged lady of rather weak intellect, who had taken up her abode with them on the ground of being one of the family, though in what way she was related to them, neither she nor any one else could explain.

Neither Nelly nor Basil seemed disposed to second their grandmother's efforts to repurchase the farm.

Basil was naturally lazy and little prone to exertion.

Nelly on the contrary was always active, but her sports and pleasures led her far afield.

The restraint of the convent school was irksome to her in the greatest degree, and never was she so happy as when scrambling over the dangerous parts of the Glindon Hills or following Basil in his long excursions after game.

Rambling about one winter's afternoon, sinking far into the snow at every step, for there had been a heavy fall in the night, and the hills were covered, Nelly, wandering far from the beaten track, saw to her surprise the figure of a man advancing towards her.

Who could he be?

From whence had he come?

As she drew nearer her quick eyes told her he was a stranger.

His face was not that of one of the Rensdon folk.

Nelly knew them all and was confident of that.

He was an ill-looking man though his dress bespoke him as belonging to one of the better classes.

He wore a huge moustache, and when he removed his hat with a courteous way to salute Nelly, she saw that his hair was cropped close to his head.

Hat in hand, the stranger stood waiting for her, stroking his long moustache complacently with his disengaged hand.

When he spoke it was in a smooth soft voice, with a slightly foreign accent.

"Will you have the goodness to tell me which is the way to Denby House?"

"Denby House! Did you expect to see the colonel?"

"No, by my faith!" said the stranger, with a shudder.

"Who then did you wish to see?"

"My dear child, how can that possibly concern you?"

"It does not concern me," answered Nelly; "nor do I care whether you reach the house or not."

So saying she turned and would have left him, but the stranger stretched forth a long arm, and laid a bony claw-like hand upon her shoulder.

"Not so fast, little one. It is necessary for me to be at Denby House in the least possible time, and you must guide me."

"Must!"

"Perhaps it is too harsh a term, but I am sure when I tell you that my business is of the greatest importance, you will not refuse."

Nelly hesitated for a moment.

The harsh and commanding tone of the stranger, and his mild, flowing language, were both equally disagreeable to her.

However, in as few words as possible she gave the required information, and stood watching the man as he rapidly descended the hill, plunging his way through the snow in the direction of Denby House.

"What can he be wanting?" she thought—"no good, I'm sure!"

Let us follow in the stranger's footsteps and see.

Down the hill he went, occasionally muttering low to himself in some foreign tongue as he descended.

Sometimes he slipped, and a deep oath escaped from beneath his heavy moustache, but still he kept perseveringly on his way, turning neither to right nor left; but when the tall chimneys of Denby House came in sight, making straight for them, disregarding all the intervening obstacles.

Arrived at the house, he made his way boldly up to the front entrance, humming a gay tune, as if rejoicing that his troubles were over.

After some little delay, the door was opened in answer to his prolonged knock.

"I wish to see Mrs. Denby."

"But you can't," said the servant, shortly, and would have closed the door had not the stranger kept it open with his foot.

"And why not, pray?"

"Because her orders are to admit no one."

"Nevertheless, I am coming in."

As he said, this he gave the door a vigorous push, and made his way into the hall.

"Now, my little drinker, as I have effected an entrance, perhaps you will not refuse to take my card to your mistress."

"It's not a bit of use."

"Pardon me if I differ from you there. I wager Mrs. Denby will see me when she learns my name."

He still held a small, thin card towards the servant, who, after a little hesitation, took it and disappeared up the stairs, leaving the stranger in the hall.

Upon the card, in the most minute characters, was inscribed the name—

*Maurice Delafosse.*

When the servant reappeared, wonder was legibly stamped upon her features.

"Well?"

The stranger smiled confidently as he addressed the servant.

"My mistress will see you, sir."

"Good! I knew it all along."

Maurice Delafosse was conducted up-stairs, and shown into a room where Ida Denby was reclining on a sofa.

Five minutes later he left the house with a self-satisfied, jaunty air, and Ida Denby rang her bell angrily and ordered her carriage to be got ready with as little delay as possible.

In less than a quarter of an hour she was being driven rapidly in the direction of Rensdon.

## CHAPTER XL

### IDA DENBY'S ERKAND.

For neither man nor angel can discern  
Hypocrisy—the only evil that walks  
Invisible, except to God alone—  
By his persuasive will, through heaven and earth;  
And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps  
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity  
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill.  
Where no ill seems.

FATHER Peter walked on, leading Genevieve by the hand.

He spoke not; and, by his clouded brow, it was plain to perceive that his mind was full, and that his thoughts were troubled.

Genevieve followed him blindly.

From her earliest days he had been her guide and comforter, and whatsoever he did seemed to her must be right.

True that during her residence in the convent, her heart had grown strangely towards the abbess.

Her heart yearned for the love of that woman inexpressibly, and, for the first time in her life, Genevieve felt sorrow in obeying the commands of Father Peter.

They descended the hill, which led into Rensdon, in silence.

Genevieve had questioned her conductor respecting his sudden return, when he was believed to be in Paris, but had received no reply.

Father Peter was so occupied with his own thoughts as to be unable to attend to other matters.

More than once he had stopped and looked back wistfully towards the convent, as if speculating in his own mind whether he were doing wisely in removing Genevieve from its sheltering walls, but each time he had resumed his journey in the direction of Rensdon.

They were within half-a-mile of the town, when a noise behind them caused them to turn their heads at the same moment, to ascertain the cause.

A carriage, drawn by a pair of handsome horses, was coming rapidly towards them.

Father Peter drew his charge close to the hedge, to suffer it to pass, but, as it approached them, its speed slackened, and at last this horse pulled up sharply, only a few yards in advance of the spot where they stood.

At the carriage window appeared the handsome and majestic face of Ida Denby.

Father Peter turned aside pale.

He drew Genevieve close to him as if for protection, and then stood awaiting the approach of Ida, who had stepped from her carriage and was coming towards them.

"Father Peter!" said she, with well simulated surprise, "I thought you many hundred miles away. What has brought you back so soon?"

Father Peter seemed at a loss to account for his presence. He was confused, for he scorned to prevaricate, and yet shrank from revealing to Ida the object which had brought him again to Rensdon.

"You have not been to Paris?" said Ida interrogatively.

"No!"

"Are you not going?"

Again he became confused and made no reply.

"I trust, father, you did not find your strength unequal to the fatigue of travelling, though that is the only way in which I can account for your presence here?"

She did not wait for a reply, but continued:

"I understand it all. Finding you could not yet proceed to the Continent, you came back here to see, once more, the poor girl to whom you are so much and so mutually attached; but yet it was hardly wise to bring her so far—it is too long a walk and she will be tired. There is a vacant seat in my carriage and I will take her back."

So saying, Ida extended her hand towards Genevieve to lead her to the carriage.

Father Peter was driven into a corner.

It was necessary that he should explain that it was not his intention that she should return to the convent.

With faltering accents he stated as much.

Ida received the news with well-feigned surprise.

"Not going back to the convent?" she cried. "For what reason?"

This time she waited for an answer, which Father Peter was not ready to give.

"Do you so mistrust me," said she, with a most winning smile, "that you think I would hurt the child? If so, indeed you wrong me. What cause have I ever given you to doubt me?"

"None, good lady—none!" Father Peter answered. "I know the kindness and goodness of your heart too well to think you mean evil against the defenceless little Genevieve."

Ida seemed no more willing to listen to his praise than to receive his blessing.

These trustful words touched her conscience like sharp thorns, and she turned away her head.

Father Peter continued:

"I feel I owe you some sort of apology for my behaviour," he said, "but yet I can scarcely explain all I mean. I left here for Paris, but ere I was many miles on my route, a strange fear, a vague dread, took possession of me."

"And does Father Peter believe in omens?" asked Ida.

"I could not withstand it," he urged, in a low tone.

"I came back and removed Genevieve from the convent."

"You have been to the convent?" exclaimed Ida, in tones of real alarm.

"No, lady—no—I did not venture there; I sent for her, but already begin to doubt whether I have done right."

"You have done wrong, father—very wrong. That you should wish to have the child with you is natural enough, but consider her prospects."

"You are right," said Father Peter, sorrowfully.

"I have slained. Genevieve shall return to the convent."

"Your decision is wise. Be sure, father, that I shall remember my promise, and keep strict watch over her."

"Heaven bless you, lady, for your kindness. May you reap your reward for your acts in another world!"

Ida started, and shivered at the words.

"Come, Genevieve," she said—"I will take you back."

"Not so, lady," answered Father Peter. "I myself will see her to the convent door. In person would I thank the kind abbess for her goodness to this child."

"No, no!" cried Ida, her face pale with alarm; "no. It must not—shall not be."

Father Peter gazed in blank amazement at the altered features of Ida Denby.

In another moment they had recovered their usual serene expression, as she continued:

"For Genevieve's sake, as well as your own, do not think of it. You are both tired, and the long walk might lead to a serious illness. I will take the girl in my carriage, and you, father, after a night's rest, may resume your journey in search of Eutacia."

Though she spoke these words in a voice of would-be humiliation, as of one cautiously giving advice, still an air of command ran through them.

"Be it so, good lady, even as you will," answered Father Peter, with a heavy sigh.

"Good-bye, little Genevieve—good-bye, and heaven bless you!"

He bent over the girl and kissed the white brow, and then, with a respectful salutation to Ida, passed on his way towards Rensdon.

As Ida helped Genevieve into the carriage, a smile of unmistakable triumph and self-congratulation lit up her features.

The carriage was driven rapidly back towards the convent, but it was not till they reached the gate of the building that Ida addressed a word to her young charge.

In a few short sentences, Ida informed the abbess that a change in Father Peter's movements had necessitated the return of Genevieve to the convent.

The fine dark eyes of the abbess sparkled with delight and affection at again seeing the child she loved so well, but others were present, and the whole interview was conducted with stately formality on both sides.

When Ida left, after imprinting a cold kiss on Genevieve's lips, the abbess dismissed all around her with the exception of the young girl.

Then it was, and not till then, that she gave way to her feelings.

She drew Genevieve towards her, and pressing her tightly to her bosom, poured forth her love in words which were strange to her to whom they were addressed, but had Ida Denby been present, to her the words would have presented a terrible significance.

At the entrance of the grounds of Denby House, Ida dismissed her carriage, announcing her intention of walking up to the house.

Leisurely she strolled along the broad path, overshadowed in summer by the mighty forest trees, but which now only put forth their black branches in ink contrast against the clear sky.

Ida had abundant food for reflection in the events of the day; indeed, so immersed was she in thought, that she failed to perceive, that leaning against one of the trees, smoking a cigarette, and to all appearance awaiting her approach, was Maurice Delafosse.

As she came near he stepped forward.

She looked up with a start.

"You here?" she exclaimed.

"Yes," he answered, jauntily, at the same time removing the cigarette from between his lips; "Yes, I was anxious to know how your errand succeeded."

Ida stamped her foot, impatiently.

"Was it not as I said? Did not the monk intend removing the girl?"

"Yes."

"A thousand thanks—I felt sure such was the case."

"You may go," said Ida, coldly.

"Have you no other commands for me?"

"None."

He threw away his cigarette and turned to depart.

"Stay—I shall be leaving the neighbourhood shortly; you must then keep watch on Genevieve and report to me—above all give me the earliest tidings of the return of Father Peter."

Maurice Delafosse bowed his head, and at the same time chinked together some pieces of money in his pocket.

"You shall have your reward," said Ida.

The Frenchman removed his hat with an elaborate flourish, bowed, and disappeared amongst the trees.

Ida pursued her way to the house without further hindrance.

Years elapsed without any material alteration in the position of the characters of our story.

Genevieve continued in the school of the convent making great progress, beloved by all, but still the two most constantly together with her were Nelly Wyld and Theodora.

Between this latter and our heroine a wonderful friendship was established, Theodora looking to Genevieve as her guide and counsellor in every matter.



The first great sorrow in the young life of Theodora came when her aunt, Mrs. Throgmorton, removed her from the school, taking her home to reside at Denby House.

Denby House was now rented by Dr. Throgmorton.

Ida had become tired of it and had been leading a restless life, wandering hither and thither, only occasionally visiting Rensdon and its neighbourhood.

Now, however, her son Austin was fast approaching his majority, and Ida had decided upon again taking up her residence in the neighbourhood, though not at Denby House.

Near the top of the hill, overlooking a lovely valley, she was having a fine palatial house erected. In the meantime, whenever she chose to visit the neighbourhood, Dr. Throgmorton placed her old room in Denby House at her disposal.

Theodora had shown a wonderful aptitude for all artistic pursuits.

Her drawings showed wonderful power and talent, and in this pursuit all her leisure time was spent.

Genevieve herself, no mean proficient in the use of the pencil, was in this, as in many other things, her principal instructor and adviser.

It may well be imagined how this poor little friendless girl clung to our heroine, and how great her grief was when she was forced to leave the convent for the grander, but less comfortable, Denby House.

Mrs. Throgmorton hearing this invited Genevieve to visit her young friend.

The visits were often repeated. Sometimes for days together Genevieve stayed at Denby House, bewitching all with whom she came in contact, by her gentle winning manner and graceful bearing.

And thus things went on till Genevieve was nineteen, and Theodora two years younger, at which time we will resume our story.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE YOUNG ARTIST.

She is not beautiful, yet her young face  
Makes up in sweetness what it lacks in grace;  
She is not beautiful, yet her blue eyes  
Beam on the heart like sunshine through the skies.  
*Alfred Wenny.*

An orphan with a very tender, shy, and sensitive nature, thrown upon the bounty of a relative who did not in the least degree desire the care and cost of her keeping, and who professed no affection for her.

Such was the condition of Theodora at Denby House.

No one set her tasks beyond her strength, or put her to degrading drudgery, or stinted her in food or sleep; yet still she felt in Genevieve's absence wearied, unsatisfied, and lonely.

She needed the vital atmosphere of love, and found only the deathly atmosphere of cold indifference.

No one threatened her, it is true, but then no one ever smiled kindly upon her; if they did not strike her, neither did they caress her.

They just let her alone—saddest of all sad conditions for such a being.

Had she been of a different temperament—of a stormy, hoyden nature, like Nelly Wyld, or of a genial, sunny temper, like Genevieve—she might have forced or won her way into notice or sympathy.

Had she possessed the self-reliance of either of her friends, she might have dispensed with the love of others, and stood alone; but with her soft, retiring, humble nature, that needed so much to be loved and encouraged, it was the saddest of all positions to be let alone.

Positive ill-usage would soon have driven the life from that feeble little body, and set the suffering spirit free.

Left to wander through all the rooms of that great, dismal old house, with its forlorn aspect and dismal corridors.

Alone she explored the terraced garden, climbed the rugged hills, and wandered in the gloomy forest.

No one knew or cared what she did.

Mrs. Throgmorton had an unmarried daughter, Rose. All the attention, all the new dresses, all the accomplishments were for her, not for poor little Theo, who, pale and thin, with large, trusting eyes, sat bending over her drawing in her own quiet attic, far away from the others.

When Genevieve came, how different was all then! The sun seemed to shine brighter, the birds to sing more sweetly, as, side by side, these two friends roamed the woodland paths together.

How much Theodora rejoiced in those walks with Genevieve!

Life and strength were inhaled with every breath.

Light came to her languishing eyes, and colour to her cheeks, giving her face a wonderful charm, which, if it were not beauty, riveted attention with a sweet fascination.

Sometimes, seated on a mossy bank beside the

brook, Genevieve would look at her with her own bright face full of love and admiration, and wonder if it were indeed the same Theodora of Denby House.

Theodora returned the look with interest.

And well she might.

Not a person that knew Genevieve but blessed her name.

Even Doctor and Mrs. Throgmorton softened towards her, treating her always as one of their most welcome guests, hinting, though, that her partiality for Theo was unaccountable.

They had never taken the pains, as Genevieve had done, to look into Theodora's heart, and see there the mine of true, kind, unselfish affection it contained.

With Rose our heroine did not get on so well.

They had no tastes in common.

Rose was handsome and good-natured, but had scarcely a thought in life beyond dress and her personal appearance, except when her fancy took a higher flight, and she speculated on the chances of obtaining a "good marriage."

These thoughts and fancies had been taught her from her earliest youth, so perhaps all things considered in this respect it was better that Theodora had been "let alone."

Genevieve was staying at Denby House, and Theodora was confiding to her some of her troubles.

She had been attempting a large picture, and had not succeeded to her satisfaction.

The subject she had chosen was Henri de Navarre at the battle of Ivry at the moment of uttering the words so graphically rendered by Macaulay:

And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall fell well he may—  
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray—  
Press where you see my white plume shine amid the  
ranks of war,  
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre.

"I cannot manage it," said Theodora, despairingly.

"The principal figure is the greatest failure. When I tried to make him look firm, he only looked stolid; when I tried to make him look enthusiastic and inspiring, he looked mad: it is a dreadful failure."

"It is not a failure," replied Genevieve; "it is a well-imagined picture. It only wants a few touches. Give me your pencil."

Genevieve sat down before the picture, and with a vigorous touch put in a few strokes which made the picture shine forth with redoubled force.

It was a pretty sight, these two young girls, one eagerly bent over the drawing, the other looking on with rapt admiration.

It was a sight few could have looked upon without pleasure, yet I much doubt if he who observed them thought of the picturesqueness of the group.

Unnoticed himself, a stranger was peering in at the half-open door, smiling a sardonic smile, which curled the ends of his long moustache, at the exclamations of delight with which Theodora greeted each fresh stroke of her friend's pencil.

Suddenly Genevieve looked up.

Her eyes rested on the door.

She caught sight of the man's face, and then of his hastily retreating form.

She turned deathly pale.

"What is the matter? what is it, Vieve?" asked Theodora, for her back was towards the door, and she had not seen the figure.

"Who was that?" asked Genevieve.

"I saw no one."

"Yes, yes; he was there, at that door, looking into the room."

"I saw no one," repeated Theodora. "What was he like?"

"A tallish man, with closely cropped hair and a heavy moustache."

"You must have fancied it, Vieve," said her friend, but not without a shade of uneasiness in her tone, for she was nervous and easily frightened.

"No—it was no fancy—wherever I go I see him. I sometimes think he is watching me."

No more was then said on the subject, and shortly afterwards the two girls descended to the room where Dr. and Mrs. Throgmorton sat.

"I have just had a visit," said the doctor, "from a Frenchman, a Mr. Delafosse. He tells me we may expect Mrs. Denby here to-morrow."

"Yes," continued his wife, "and she brings her son with her. Rose, mind you pay great attention to him—he will inherit all the Denby estate," she added, addressing her daughter with a meaning smile.

The next morning Ida arrived, but scarcely did she stay in the house long enough to refresh herself before leaving for the convent.

She was shown into a room where the abbess sat alone.

"Ida Denby," cried the abbess, as she entered, turning even paler, if possible, than her natural complexion.

"Yes, Mother Agatha, Ida Denby, and not an apparition, as your appalled look would seem to imply," replied the fair visitor, in the sweet, clear, monotone that distinguished her utterance.

Never was a greater contrast between human beings than there was between these two women.

The abbess with the dark face, that the deep cares of thought, suffering and passion had aged before its time, and her large, dark, soul thrilling eyes, and deep toned voice.

The visitor, the fairest of all fair women, and the calmest of all calm creatures, with her snow-white face, so statuesque in its repose, and so polished in its smoothness, and her clear, pure, silvery tones.

They were as opposite in costume as in everything else.

The dark, troubled nun was habited in the black veil and long serge gown of the convent.

Her fair, calm visitor was attired in a light gauzy dress of the latest fashion.

"You are waiting to know my business, I suppose?" said Ida.

The abbess bowed her head.

"It is soon told."

"Well!"

Something in her visitor's tone had caused Mother Agatha to speak this one word with ill-concealed eagerness and anxiety.

"I come to remove Genevieve."

The abbess started from her seat with a half suppressed cry, that deepened to a groan as she sank back into her chair.

"You promised that she should stay with me," faltered the unhappy woman.

"Not for ever."

"Yes—yes—for ever."

"Then I have altered my mind."

"Ah! you think yourself safe now. You think you may torment me as you will."

"What mean you by those words? I do not comprehend you."

"Yes! Ida Denby, you do. Why play the hypocrite before me?"

Ida laughed a low musical laugh.

"That which I ask of you is very simple."

The abbess only answered with a deep sigh.

"Miss Lenoir is my ward," continued the fair visitor. "Miss Lenoir is my ward, and as such should enter the world."

"She is my child!" moaned the abbess, in a deep, rich, vibrating tone of passionate emotion, as though the strongest chords of her heart had been swept at once and wailed forth a whole life-time's pent-up agony.

"She is my child!"

"Dare to claim her then!"

The words were defiant, but the tones were clear and calm as ever, and contrasted strangely with the burst of passion with which the other exclaimed:

"Woman or fiend! Which are you?"

"Whichever you please," replied Ida, quietly, but with an expression almost amounting to a sneer.

"Fiend! You are a fiend! You have made my life—a not a desert—that had been mercy; but a gehenna of dry bones! strewn with murdered hopes, and burning, maddening memories."

"Have you anything else to say?" asked Ida, rising.

"Yes, woman—yes! Remember this—remember, a day will come when our cause will be tried before an all-powerful tribunal."

"And then —"

"On that day you will surely receive your just punishment!"

Ida laughed again, that low, irritating laugh of hers.

The abbess continued, in a loud, fierce tone, in which her passions had evidently obtained the mastery:

"Not content with having bereft me of one, not satisfied either with having rent Austin from my bosom, and kept him from my sight—"

"Abbess!"

"You would tear this child also from my bleeding heart."

"You know not what you say, Mother Agatha," retorted Ida, with great calmness.

"I know but too well. I know who has made a barren wilderness of a life which might have been so fruitful."

"Come, holy mother," sneered Ida, "restrain your passion. What have you to do with family love and vain human affections renounced at the altar long ago—and guilty now, if ever entertained in your perjured heart?"

"Fiend! why do you torture me?"

"I will set the holy mother superior an example of forbearance, and not return railing for railing," said Ida, calmly. "I remain in the neighbourhood for one week longer. At the end of that time I shall call and take Genevieve away with me. You understand, Mother Agatha? I wish you good day, and peace."

The portress let out Mrs. Denby, but had scarcely done so, when the sound of a heavy fall arrested her attention.

Upon entering the parlour, she found the abbess stretched upon the floor in a deep swoon.

It was some time before she recovered her senses, and two days passed before she could summon sufficient courage to break the news to Genevieve that they were so soon to part.

In the meantime Ida Denby had issued invitations to all the young people in the neighbourhood to a party at Denby House.

Genevieve was of course invited.

The abbess summoned her to her own room.

"Genevieve," said she, "when you go to this party at Denby House—"

"I am not going, holy mother."

"Not going?" cried the abbess, in astonishment.

"No, dear mother. The time is so short that I can hope to spend with you, that I cannot tear myself away even for one evening."

"You must go."

Genevieve looked surprised.

"Believe me, I wish you much—oh! very much—to go, for you can do something for me there."

"I will do anything for you."

"Austin—Mrs. Denby's heir—will be present. Notice carefully how he looks, how he talks, and whether he seems strong in health and intelligent and good, so that you will be able to bring me word."

"Do you know him? Have you seen him?"

The abbess did not answer the question.

"You will go to this party, Genevieve?"

"I will, if it is your wish."

"Bless you, my child!" said the abbess, folding her in her arms.

(To be continued.)

## THE SHADOW ON THE HEARTH.

### CHAPTER XIV.

Love is not love  
That alters when it alteration finds;  
Oh, no! it is an ever-fixed rock  
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken.

Shakespeare.

"Once upon a time, not many years ago, as a young artist, who shall be nameless, was sketching on Loch Katrine, it chanced that a skiff, containing a man and a lady, was seen gliding on the waters. The man was a local boatman, but the lady was the dowager Duchess of Castleton."

"Oh, that story of the Duchess of Castleton is too old—we all know it," said the cherry-cheeked damsel.

"Did I ever tell it before?" asked Vanderlyn.

"Of course you have," said the pert little maiden. "And all about how your son, Mr. Eugene, when the boat upset, pushed out to the rescue, and saved the lady, and how she promised never to forget him—and how she never remembered him—and how you've always been expecting that she would appear at the right moment, like the fairy godmother in the story book, and give Eugene ever so much money, and all that."

"Did I ever tell you that Eugene was so proud that he refused to give his name, and left Scotland soon after the occurrence?"

"No you never told that," said the cherry-cheeked damsel.

"Well, I tell it now. But there's something more."

"Oh, do let us hear it!" cried the cherry-cheeked damsel.

"Then keep quiet, and don't interrupt me again," said Vanderlyn. "Well, this very day, an advertisement appeared in the second column of the *Times*:—'If E. V. the artist, who was at Loch Katrine in the year —, will call at the office of—(naming a noted lawyer of Bedford-row)—he will hear of something to his advantage.' Well, this afternoon Eugene and I called. The Duchess of Castleton hadn't forgotten him, and had found out his name. That's all."

"And Mr. Vanderlyn sat down."

"That isn't all?" cried the girls.

"Well, it isn't all; but the amount of it is, that the duchess has instructed her agent to make Eugene as rich as heart can desire. There are some conditions to her generosity, but the particulars haven't been made known to us yet. Only this, we are at once to take possession of a splendidly furnished house at the West End."

"Is not this a romance?" whispered Julia to Eugene who sat beside her.

"It seems like one," replied the young artist. "But a large sun has already been placed in my hands, and that seems like reality."

After the wonder created by this extraordinary announcement had subsided, congratulations were showered on the fortunate young man and his father by all their companions, male and female.

"And what do you leave us, Eugene?" asked Morton.

"This very night. 'So runs the bond,' don't it, father?"

"Dear Julia," whispered Eugene, "I shall never forget this evening nor you. If this strange good fortune of mine elates me, it is only for your sake. Ah! if you knew how much I prize the tress of raven hair your hand bestowed and which I wear here, next my heart!"

The poor girl was too much affected to reply, except by an affectionate pressure of the hand.

Turning to his companions, Eugene said:

"They say 'poverty parts good company.' You shall find, dear companions of my toils and privations, that good fortune draws the ties of friendship closer. If possible, you shall find that you are dearer to me in prosperity than you were in adversity. I won't say 'Good-bye,' for we shall all meet again soon."

A fortnight elapsed, and the inmates of the shabby-genteel house had heard nothing of the parvenus.

They were now assembled in the sitting-room, Julia, Martha, Morton, and Father Luke, holding a sort of indignation meeting.

"I never could have believed it," said the fiddler, "though I have had a wide experience of human nature. This nearly destroys my faith in it. Why, a dog is more to be trusted than a man."

"Look at Julia," whispered Morton to Martha. "How pale the poor girl is. She really loved him, and it will break her heart."

"All you men are alike," replied Martha. "If it had been your case, you'd have served me just so."

"Then I thank heaven I'm a poor man. Poverty with you is bliss—without you, wealth were gilded misery," said Morton. "But I've an idea, and it is this: Since the mountain will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain. We will go to the Vanderlyns—understand me—not to solicit or even accept favours; but to give them a piece of our mind."

"Not a bad notion," said Father Luke. "They richly deserve it."

It was arranged that Julia should remain. The others were soon ready and left the house in company.

Julia, when left alone, gave free vent to emotions which had been held in check by the presence of her companions.

"How I loved that man!" she thought, as she wept bitterly. "How I trusted him! and to think he has forgotten me so soon! Not a word, not a message in a fortnight. Oh, my heart will break!"

Leaving the poor girl to her inconsolable grief, let us follow our adventurers.

In one of the best streets in Belgravia, before a magnificent four-storied house, our three friends halted and rang. A servant in livery opened the door.

"Is Mr. Vanderlyn at home?"

"Which Mr. Vanderlyn—senior or junior?"

"Either."

"What names?"

"They gave them."

The footman said he would see whether the gentlemen were at home to them. He did not ask them to walk into the hall, but they did so. Several minutes elapsed, but the messenger did not return. Then Morton proposed walking boldly up-stairs.

"We'll make ourselves at home," he said, "come what may."

His associates assented, and disregarding the exclamations of an astonished "Jeames," they went up, and found themselves in a suite of superb rooms opening out of each other, and of palatial proportions and furnishing. The two outer rooms were untenanted, but in the third, sitting in a huge arm-chair, lived with crimson velvet, sat an individual whom at first glance they took to be a stranger, but who, on closer scrutiny, turned out to be no other than Mr. Jeremiah Vanderlyn.

It was no wonder they did not recognize him at first, for he was greatly changed.

He raised an eye-glass to his face, and surveying them through it, exclaimed in an affected tone:

"How do? how do? Excuse my rising. Pray be seated. Quite an unexpected honour!"

His guests seated themselves, smothering their indignation at their reception, and their mirth at the ridiculous manner of their host.

At this moment, Eugene rushed joyously into the room.

"My dear fellow," he cried, shaking hands with Morton. "How delighted I am to see you. Miss Wilson, excuse me—but I hardly knew whom to greet first. Father Luke, your hand, my good old friend."

"Then you haven't quite forgotten us?" said the fiddler.

"Forgotten you?—you've never been absent from my thoughts a moment. I had planned a pleasant surprise for you. You've spoiled it, but it isn't much matter."

"And what was the intended surprise, Mr. Vanderlyn?" asked Martha.

"Only this—I have been arranging matters so as to transfer the little Bohemian colony from the dear, old tumble-down house that harboured us so long to this mansion. I have a room fitted up for you Morton—a snug apartment for you, Father Luke, and a little gem of a place, dear Martha, for you, too. The first advances made me by the duchess's agent have been consumed in these arrangements."

"Eugene, you're a fine fellow," said Morton.

"Hang it! I can't stand it any longer!" cried old Vanderlyn, throwing off his fine manners. "It's no use to try to be a fine gentleman at my time of life. I must feel like myself once more. And now, my friends, believe me, you're heartily welcome."

Here the same footman who had opened the door, appeared to inform young Vanderlyn that Mr. Stanley desired to see him.

"Show him in here. It's the duchess's agent and man of business," said Eugene to his guests.

Mr. Stanley appeared directly afterwards.

"I wished to see you on business, Mr. Vanderlyn," he said, glancing at the company.

"These are all intimate friends of mine," said Eugene, "and I have no secrets from them."

"May I speak out, then?"

"With perfect freedom."

"Well, sir, the time has come when I am directed to unfold my client's intentions with regard to you. I am directed, in the first place, to state that as she is possessed of vast wealth, the sum she proposes to bestow upon you will make no perceptible impression on her fortune. This she is anxious to impress on you, as she knows and appreciates your delicacy of character."

Eugene bowed.

"The sum which I am directed by her to pay into your hands is thirty thousand pounds sterling."

"It is magnificent!" said Eugene, almost agitated at the amount thus placed within his grasp.

"You are aware, I have already told you, that the gift is not unconditional. My client is a peculiar person, benevolent, but eccentric. Here is a paper drawn up for you to sign. It contains the sole condition which the duchess annexes to her gift."

Eugene took the paper and read it rapidly.

"I perceive," he said, "that the only condition is, that I shall marry a young lady in whom the duchess is interested."

"Precisely," said Mr. Stanley. "Let me add that she is virtuous, accomplished, and beautiful—that she has seen you and is prepossessed in your favour."

"You may well say your client is eccentric, sir," said Eugene.

"Oh, she has her own way of doing things; but permit me to observe that a poor young man who should reject such an offer—wealth and a lovely bride—would be something more than eccentric."

"Certainly the world would call him so," replied Vanderlyn.

"Take time to consider your answer," said Stanley.

"I have no wish to hurry you."

"It needs no time to consider of such a brilliant offer," said young Vanderlyn, with sparkling eyes.

"Poor Julia!" whispered Martha to Morton.

"This is my answer!" cried Eugene. And tearing the paper into tatters, he flung them on the floor and stamped them under foot.

"Are you mad?" exclaimed Mr. Stanley.

"Am I mad?" cried Eugene, grasping Morton's hand.

"Mad! you're the finest fellow in the world."

"You're a hero!" cried Martha.

"What do you say, father?" asked Eugene. "Am I right to remand you to a life of toil?"

"Don't say a word, my boy—I've suffered martyrdom since I've been a free gentleman."

"After what has passed," said the agent, "I need hardly say you will not expect to retain possession of this house."

"I give it up to-night—this moment," said the painter. "I surrender the house to you this moment."

"Possibly if you write an explanatory letter to my client—"

"A begging letter, you mean, Mr. Stanley," interrupted Eugene. "I regret to see that you misapprehend my character. Come, father."

The whole party lost no time in obeying Eugene's summons. They returned to the old shabby-genteel house, and, bursting into it,

"Give me joy!" cried Eugene, shaking hands with Julia, who was sitting up anxiously awaiting the return of the party; "I'm a free man once more. The fortune was a dream. My patroness proposed terms that I could not accept, and the castle in the air has vanished into smoke."

"But what does it all mean?" asked the girl, opening her beautiful eyes wide, and looking from one to the other.

In a few words he recounted the offer he had received, and its rejection.



"My own, noble Eugene," was all that Julia could say.

"There was not a particle of nobility about it," said Eugene; "it was the most selfish act of my life."

"How selfish?" asked Julia, looking up and smiling through her tears.

"Because, to accept the terms I rejected would have been to embrace a life of misery. Because you are a prize that would depress the souls if the wealth of the Indies were placed in the other. You and I, Julia, know that wealth and happiness are not synonymous terms: but that love is wealth, and has the power to gild the ruggedest pathway. To enjoy your love is to be successful—to provide for your comfort will so stimulate my imagination and concentrate my energies, that I shall be sure in the end to command fortune."

"But you know I have a mother's consent to obtain yet."

"When she knows me for what I am worth, I am sure she will consent," said Eugene.

"So am I, dearest," replied the happy girl.

## CHAPTER XV.

All the years of life may scarce outweigh  
The action of a moment. *Hardy.*

ONE morning after the episode related in our last chapter, the postman left at the door of Mrs. Carew's residence a packet with a black seal. It was addressed in a strange handwriting to Mrs. Alice Carew. She tore it open, and found an enclosure of two letters, one addressed to herself, the other to her daughter. She instantly recognized the writing as that of her long-lost, guilty son, whom she believed and even hoped to be dead.

One of the letters was as follows:

"Camp Rangiriri, New Zealand.

"DEAREST MOTHER,—When these lines reach your hand the writer will be numbered with the dead. I have provided to have them sent to you in case I fall to-morrow. We have received marching orders, and to-morrow, ere dawn, the regiment advances to meet the foe. I have a presentiment that a soldier's death is reserved for him who fled a felon's fate. If that fate be indeed mine, the world will never know that James Harwood, a soldier of the —th Regiment, and Frederick Carew, accused of the most awful crime that man can commit, are one and the same. But I must not, cannot die without declaring to you and Marian that I am innocent of that crime. You will believe me, knowing that I write this, as it were, under the shadow of death; that it is my final declaration before going to my dread account. And I here take heaven to witness that I speak the truth. I could not make this truth appear to the eyes of man, and hence, at the peril of my life, I fled from the trial which awaited me, and which I knew, from circumstantial evidence against me, must consign me to a felon's fate, brand my name with infamy, and intensify your agony and that of my dear sister.

"On the night of my removal from prison I threw myself from the train when running at full speed. I expected death, but, strange to say, I was only bruised, not stunned by the fall. I plunged into the river, and swam swiftly along the shore, till I found a secure hiding-place among the bushes. Once or twice my pursuers were in my immediate vicinity, yet I escaped detection. After the hottest fury of pursuit was over, or had turned into another channel, I emerged from my hiding-place, and by chance stumbled on a skiff, with a pair of oars, which had been hauled up in a thicket. I embarked and crossed the river. That night I walked a long way into the country, and towards morning lay down in the woods and slept.

"A couple of hours after sunrise I resumed my journey, having satisfied my appetite by eating some ripe corn I plucked from a field by the wayside. I ventured at last to enter a village where the people, stolid and indifferent, only hear by accident what is passing in the great world. There I offered my services to a farmer, agreeing to work for a small sum of money and my board. By toiling early and late I succeeded in winning the good graces of my employer. These labours in the field, the frugality of my diet, and total abstinence from the stimulus I had so long indulged in, gave me strength and vigour, in spite of the gnawings of conscience and remorse. My frame filled out, my hands became hard and horny, and I was so unburdened that my appearance was entirely changed. Moreover I had my hair, which I formerly wore long, cut close to my head, and permitted my beard, whiskers and moustache to grow.

"This altered my appearance so much that I was satisfied that no description written at the time of my arrest, when I was thin, pale, shrunken and feeble, would serve to identify me. At the expiration of some weeks, I left my place. I dared not, however, communicate with home. All this time I was hoping

that some chance would vindicate my innocence of the charge brought against me. No such revelation came, however. I continued to toil for my bread; continued to grow more and more robust, and to begin by degrees to hope that I should escape detection. A restless spirit, however, drove me from place to place, and finally I enlisted at Chatham.

"But I must go back in my narrative. I have been mad and wicked. When I first left Holmby for the metropolis it was my intention to pursue an honourable career. I was young, believed that I had talents, and my generous, confiding father placed a liberal capital at my disposal. Better than that, he gave me, as he had always done, the best counsel. He wished me to remain at Holmby and assist him in managing the estate, a large share of which would one day be my own. Ah! why did I leave father, mother, sister, and dear, beautiful Holmby? At one time I falsely said I was fated to leave it—pernicious heresy! We are the architects of our own fortunes. After I plunged into dissipation—after I had become a domestic traitor, a swindler, a debauchee—a sot, I said I could not help it. I said I tried to reform, but could not. A base fiction! I confess now, in the agony of contrition that I could, by the exercise of my will, at any time have paused in my career. But I did not exercise my will, at the very times when I was soothing my conscience by the apology that I was striving my best.

"Finally I sank so low that it would have been criminal in my father any longer to yield to my importunities for money. He had given it to me again and again, to pay my debts and to retrieve my character. The time came when he knew that to supply me with means was only to hasten my downward steps in the path of perdition. He cast me off; he was right in doing so.

"I now come to that fatal night of the murder. That night my father was at the tavern, and I knew that he had just received four thousand pounds. I was emboldened by drink, then my only source of courage, to confront him and demand money. He refused me, and, when I continued to bar his passage, he hurled me from him and left the house. I swore loudly—the whole house must have heard me—to be revenged; but they were only the wild words of drunken passion—nothing more. But directly afterwards a criminal idea occurred to me. I would track him, overtake him and possess myself of the treasure I coveted. I did so. In a glade of the woods on his own estate, I laid my hands upon him, and threatened his life. Horror and indignation (he evidently recognized my voice) found vent in his expressions; but he was too much overwhelmed to offer effectual resistance. I tore his pocket-book from his breast, and retreated with my prize. Directly afterwards, I heard a despairing call—"Frederick! Frederick!" I paused, and soon after, while hesitating what to do, I found myself in the grasp of Nell, the gipsy woman. She dragged me to the spot I had just left, and there lay my father weltering in his blood. Though my hand had not taken his life, yet I was the author of his death. I had broken his heart by my misconduct, and now, but for the detention I had caused him that night, he might have escaped the assassin and reached home in safety. I exclaimed involuntarily that I had killed him. Yet evidence that I had done so was not wanting. His money was found on my person, and the knife, the instrument of the terrible deed, bore my name upon the handle. How it came there is still a mystery to me. That knife, which was a valuable one, I had not had in my possession for weeks. This is all I know—the whole truth of the terrible deed. When I was arrested I was prostrated with debauchery, and more fit for the hospital than the gaol. My mind was so clouded that I could see nothing in its true light, and this morbid condition continued for many days and nights. Sometimes I thought that I had really killed my father with my own hand. When my mind was a little clearer I perceived that the circumstantial evidence against me was overwhelming. I saw that I was destined to die for an offence I had not committed; but I felt that I had done enough to deserve death; and the prospect of it, strange and terrible as it may seem, actually afforded me relief.

"It was only when I was being conducted to the town where my trial was to take place, that the horror of a felon's fate flashed full upon me. I resolved that your son—that Marian's brother—should not perish on the scaffold. The rest I have already told you.

"And now, dear mother, farewell! Remember, that when you read these lines your erring son will be lying in a soldier's grave. Do not weep for me; I shall have been more mercifully dealt with than I deserved. Pray that I may be forgiven. Know that I have, by the deepest contrition and humility, sorrowed for my sins. Farewell, farewell for ever!

"FREDERICK CAREW."

The paper dropped from the mother's hand, and she sank, overwhelmed upon the sofa. Marian, who had finished her own letter—a tender and contrite adieu—

flew to her relief, and, looked in each other's arms, they mingled their tears. In the cup of their bitter agony there was mingled a healing balm—Frederick was not an assassin. He was repentant, and died a soldier's death upon the field of honour.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Many sounds are sweet,  
Most ravishing and pleasant to the ear;  
But sweeter none than voice of faithful friend.

*Pope.*

WHILE we follow the fortunes of other characters of our story, we must not forget the occupants of the shabby-genteel house to which we have introduced our readers.

One forenoon, Julia had been making a call there, and Eugene found it out, by accident, of course, and not having met for a long time, owing to fortuitous circumstances, they had a great deal to say to each other.

Martha, having discreetly recollected that she had some pressing business to attend to, left the lovers together, and, strange to say, they were not disappointed at the absence of a third party.

"Pray how is Father Luke?" asked Julia.

"What, haven't you heard the news? He is in the hospital, and has had an operation on his eyes—removal of the cataract. The surgeon gives him hopes that he will recover his eyesight. Indeed, he was expected home to-day."

"Why has he never thought of it before?"

"He has thought of it, but he never could make up his mind to apply for relief as a charity patient, and has hitherto been too poor to pay for the operation himself."

"Has he grown rich all at once?"

"No, but he received the other day an anonymous present of a considerable sum of money, a portion of which he devoted to the realization of his long-cherished project."

"Has he any idea of the source of his good fortune?" asked Julia.

"Not the slightest. But there are plenty of people who delight in doing good by stealth. I, too, have had very good fortune, Julia."

"I am delighted to hear it."

"A number of my pictures have been sold, and I find I am beginning to make a name. I am working like a beaver—and you know for whose sake, dearest."

A blush of modesty and pleasure lent an additional charm to the beautiful face of the listener.

"Yes," continued Eugene, "I have woke up and found myself famous. This morning I have had a note from a lady, begging me to call at her house this afternoon to give some advice about arranging her pictures."

"A lady!" cried Julia—and there was the slightest possible expression of vexation on her pouting lips.

"A widow lady," said Eugene.

"Beware of widlers!" replied Julia, with a comical expression, quoting the words of the elder Weller.

"Oh, this lady is old enough to be my mother," said Eugene—"so they tell me. It is Mrs. Carew."

"I have heard of her—mother to the rich heiress."

"The same—the daughter is a millionaire and a beauty, according to report."

"Well, I declare!" cried Julia, looking up at the clock. "I've spent an hour here gossiping with Martha and you—and I have heaps of work to do."

Eugene made every effort to detain her, but in vain, and finally suffered her to depart.

That afternoon, he presented himself at Mrs. Carew's house, and was received very courteously by the widow.

She had a long conversation with him, chiefly on art, and then she showed him the paintings that adorned an inner room, fitted up with exquisite taste. To his surprise and delight, he recognized many of his own productions which had been exhibited for sale.

"When I look at these things," he said, "I feel that I am indebted more to your generosity than your taste, madam."

"I admire them very much," replied Mrs. Carew.

"But they are not my selection—they are my daughter's purchases. Will you, excuse me for one moment?"

Vanderlyn bowed. The lady left the room, and while the painter was absorbed in examining a fine copy of a Murillo, a light step in the apartment caused him to turn his head.

It was a young lady exquisitely beautiful, with light golden hair, blue eyes, and a sweet smile upon her lips.

"Have I the honour of addressing Mr. Eugene Vanderlyn?" she said.

The painter was mute with astonishment—the voice was familiar to his ear, the features dear to his

heart, but the golden hair and delicately-pencilled eyebrows bewildered him.

"Miss—Miss Carew!" he stammered.

"That is my name, sir."

"Pardon me, madam, but your wonderful resemblance to a fair friend—"

"Is it possible there is a lady so like me as to impress the keen eye of an artist?"

"No! such a resemblance is impossible! Dearest Julia!" and he attempted to seize her hand.

"Sir," said the heiress, drawing back with an air of indescribable hauteur—"you forget yourself."

"I am certainly mad!" cried the painter, covered with confusion.

Marian had approached her hand to the bell-ropes, but she suddenly dropped it, and burst into a fit of laughter.

"Why, Eugene—don't you know me?"

"I thought I did," stammered the poor artist.

"What have you done with that lock of jet-black hair I gave you for a keepsake?"

"I wear it next my heart."

"I can tell you where to buy plenty of the same sort. But ah, me! you were captivated by a brunette with dark hair and eyebrows—you can never be so devoted to a blonde. You were in love, I really believe, with a poor little sewing-girl; you will turn with disdain from an heiress who has nearly a million at her disposal—but yet who is richer in the love of one brave heart, than if she had ten times that amount."

"But tell me!" cried Vanderlyn, who was still like one in a dream—"the meaning, the motive of this eccentric masquerade?"

"It is a brief tale. I was rich and I was afraid of riches. I had seen how often they were a snare to their possessors. I found myself surrounded by mercenary admirers—I wished to be beloved for myself alone. I wished, too, to study the actual habits and necessities of the poor. Therefore I resolved to disguise myself and pass myself off as a sewing-girl. I took lodgings at the house of a humble friend of the family who was let into the secret. I made the acquaintance of Martha, and through her that of yourself and the other inmates of your house."

"Then you were the good fairy of the Bohemians?"

"You are pleased to call me so."

"And Father Luke's violin?"

"Was my gift."

"And the money which enabled him to put himself in the surgeon's hands?"

"Was a present from me."

"And Martha's sewing-machine?"

"Didn't I surprise her?"

"But my dream is over now," said Eugene, sadly. "Even if you were willing to link your fortunes with mine, your mother would never consent."

"She has just given me her consent."

"But you forget how poor I am, Julia—I beg pardon—I really don't know your name."

"What a predicament for a man who has offered me his heart and hand! Julia will be a name ever dear to me, but my godfather and godmother called me Marian."

"Dear Marian!"

"I really believe you are tired of your bargain. Beware, sir, if you are false to me, I shall certainly sue you for a breach of promise."

"Couldn't I escape on a legal quibble?" asked Vanderlyn, with a smile. "I promised to marry Miss Julia Manners."

"Couldn't I overset your plea, by proving that Julia Manners and Marian Carew are one and the same person?"

She smiled so bewitchingly that Eugene, for the life of him, could not forbear pressing his lips to hers. He was engaged in this agreeable occupation, when a carriage was heard stopping before the house.

"Hark!" cried Marian. "That's an old friend of ours."

Before Vanderlyn could ask who it was, the door opened, and Father Luke walked in. He bowed to Marian and the artist, and then said, humbly:

"I was requested to call here. Are you the gentleman of the house?"

"No, Father Luke, only a visitor like yourself," replied the painter.

"My dear friend," cried the fiddler, "give me your hand. You know I never saw you in my life. The restoration of my sight perplexes me. I can only at first tell my friends by their voices."

"Then your sight is restored?"

"Perfectly, thank heaven. And who is this beautiful lady?"

"Do you know my voice, too?"

"Julia!" cried the old man.

"Julia no more," said Eugene, "but our benefactress—yours—mine—the friend of all—Miss Marian Carew, the famous heiress."

"But happier," said Marian, blushing deeply, "in being the affianced bride of Eugene Vanderlyn."

She placed her hand in the painter's as she spoke, and at that moment Mrs. Carew entered.

Vanderlyn addressed her in a tone of deep feeling, and thanked her for the generous confidence she had reposed in him. He pledged himself to cherish and protect the inestimable treasure she had confided to his care, and the accent of truth gave a charm and force to every word he uttered.

Father Luke, in simple but well-chosen and eloquent words, expressed his gratitude to Marian, and the tears started to the widow's eyes as she listened to the praises of her daughter. But while he was speaking, he was interrupted by words of angry altercation in the hall. A servant seemed expostulating with some intruder, and the latter exclaimed, with an oath—"I will see her."

"That voice!" cried Father Luke—"that villain's voice! Though years have passed since I last heard it, I could swear to it among a thousand."

"Are you sure?" cried Mrs. Carew, who was trembling violently.

"I am sure," replied the fiddler.

"Then step into the back room, where you will be near at hand. Marian and you, too, Mr. Vanderlyn—go with him. I fear that I must see this person who insists upon an interview."

Marian and her lover retired into the adjoining room. To whom she there introduced Vanderlyn the reader must not yet discover.

#### CHAPTER XVII

This is the villain! Look ye well upon him,  
That when ye see another man like him  
Ye may avoid him. *Shakespeare.*

The drawing-room door was flung violently open and Jervis Chester strode in. His face was flushed, both with anger and with liquor, and as he faced Mrs. Carew, he looked the very incarnation of evil.

"So, madam!" he began, "it appears that you have given orders to your servants to forbid my entrance."

"I certainly have," replied Mrs. Carew, firmly.

"Let me tell you," said Chester, with a sneer, "that if you have placed sentinels at the door, I have the countersign, the open sesame which will be sure to admit me."

"You think so, sir?"

"You know it. I have only to say to your servants, as I will say to the world—'I am your mistress's husband!'"

"And I have only to declare," retorted the lady, "that the assertion is a falsehood."

"Will you deny that years and years ago you were married to me in due and legal form?"

"I will not deny it, if I am forced to the confession," was the remarkable reply which filled the listeners in the next room with as much amazement as the assertion of Chester had done.

"Then you admit," pursued Chester, with an air of triumph, "that you have no right to the name you bear?"

"I admit no such thing," replied Mrs. Carew, raising her head proudly. "Before the face of heaven and the world, I dare avow that I was the true and lawful wife of Seaton Carew, and I dare you to dispute it. The time has passed when I need fear to avow the story of my early life—and had you not come here this day I should have told my daughter and her affianced husband all. Would to heaven I had done so long ago, and spared my husband the anguish that embittered his last days, and myself the remorse that will attend me to the grave. Young and inexperienced—a mere child—I was fascinated by your winning exterior—the beauty of the serpent's skin—and married you. You know well how cruelly you repaid the confidence of your child-wife. You know how you deserted me. But once free from the accursed thralldom which had nearly destroyed me, I should not have married, though free to do so, for tidings of your death reached me, false tidings circulated by you to baffle your creditors and others you had wronged. It was then I committed the great error of my life. Seaton Carew wooed me, and only exacted from the poor girl he was willing to raise to affluence, a pledge that he was my first love. The temptation to utter the assurance was too great. It was not that I feared to lose his wealth, but to lose him, whom I loved more than life itself. He married me and we were happy, till you, in a fatal hour, returned. Fool! dupe! coward that I was! But bitterly have I rued my weakness and folly! Having planted misery in my heart, you promised for a large sum of money and the sacrifice of my jewels, to leave me undisturbed; but you broke your word to me; again and again you presented yourself, resolved to ruin the remnants of my peace. Our interviews were detected, and my husband believed me false."

"Go on—go on—madam," said Chester; "it pleases me. But you have not given me credit for half my enterprise and success. Know that it was I

who seduced your son from the path of duty, and you have me to thank for dragging him down with iron hand till he became the assassin of his father, and escaped the gallows to fill a drunkard's grave."

"It is false!" cried Alice Carew. "He was innocent of the crime laid to his charge, and so far from filling a dishonoured grave—behold him!"

The door opened, and a young man, pale, thin, feeble, wearing a military uniform, with the left sleeve empty and pinned to his breast, entered, and passing his right arm round his mother's waist, confronted Jervis Chester with a stern and threatening face.

"You here!" said Chester, turning deadly pale.

"Yes, I am here," said Frederick, "to thank you for your kind offices—to reward you for your efforts to destroy me body, soul and reputation. You did indeed succeed but too well—you did indeed drag me down into the mire—you did indeed cause me to bring my old father's grey hairs in sorrow to the grave—but there was something within, that whispered me I might atone in some measure for the misery I had inflicted by my awful career of crime. Under a feigned name, I wrought for my bread; under a feigned name I entered the service of my country. Sorely wounded on the battle-field, I thought I had seen my mother's and sister's face for the last time when I saw them in a felon's cell. But heaven has willed it otherwise—and I have come back to defend my mother's honor against all assailants."

"You will not shield your name from dishonor. When it is known that you robbed your father—you have yet to prove that you did not murder him—"

"Held!" cried Father Luke—rushing in from the other room, followed by Vanderlyn and Marian. "I can contain myself no longer. Look me in the face, villain, if you dare!"

"Luke Harper!" cried Chester, aghast.

"Yes," said Father Luke, "you may well tremble at the sight of me. You know me well, and I know you but too well. You didn't bear the name of Jervis Chester when you lived in Bangor. It was as Mark Stacey that you figured then; but you were a false villain as ever went unknung, whatever name you bore. You talk of robbery, you shameless cur! Who was it that passed a forged note on your friend and robbed him, a widower, childless and blind, of the last pound he had in the world? Answer me that?"

"Bah!" said Chester, insolently. "I defy you to prove it."

"Prove it! I can prove it easily enough," said the fiddler. "You showed the note to others besides myself, they can swear to it—have sworn to it and it is in safe hands. I shall see you in Newgate yet for forgery."

"Pshaw!" said Chester, contemptuously. "I scoff at your threats. But after all, this is not so very amusing—and so, as none of you appear to be in a friendly humour, I'll relieve you of my presence."

"Not yet," said Frederick, sternly. "You forced yourself into this house against the will of its occupants, now you shall remain here against your own."

"Stand back," said Chester, clenching his fist, "the man who interrupts my free passage hence will have cause to regret it."

"Halt, there!" cried, in a voice of thunder, a young man of soldierly bearing, suddenly coming on the scene.

Chester no sooner caught sight of this new-comer, than he staggered back as if a bullet had been driven through his heart, his eyes staring wide open, his under jaw dropping—a ghastly image.

"So you know me it seems, you black-hearted villain!" he exclaimed.

Chester recovered himself with a mighty effort. He was audacious to the last.

"What are you doing here?" he asked, with a swaggering air.

"Only my duty," was the rejoinder.

"You've got nothing against me?"

"Mr. Jervis Chester," said the new-comer, solemnly, and his manner impressed all present, "your time has come, and here before this company, I charge you with murder!"

"Murder?" cried Father Luke.

"Yes; so sure as there's a providence above us, there stands the red-handed, black-hearted murderer of Mr. Carew."

Mrs. Carew and Marian shrieked aloud. As for Chester, he had anticipated the charge, and, in his desperation, made a frantic rush for the door, but Frederick seized his collar with a grasp of iron, while, at the sound of the scuffle, two officers who had been posted in the hall, came in promptly and secured him.

"Away with him! Hold him fast and slip the handcuffs on him, for he's a desperate villain!" cried his accuser to the officers.

"Frederick," said Mrs. Carew, "explain this mystery!"

"Yes, mother," said the young man, hurriedly, "but not now; I must go with them."

A. S. after o taken as Fre regim assum for Ne done, as bro and w were a Freder what r name v tavern which On t a room opened in the Gray w his lan heard room, there v come tionally, and ma to use l wild pr determi orouchi shade, the wo stood at a suddes Chester prostrat pocketa his feet the mu horror, of Ches "and m and Ch life, dar him by he breat distance most so saying, most ter against, accout his min might l the esc threw h his secr in Engli his hear to quit ment on attack Zealand hospital nized F Chester sentence and after hardene an unfi unrepres Soon married Frederi travel. The p render i residu Vanderl now Ma Mr. Jo as a mas Miss M their nea sented b the nam place, as No of induce He had f failed si marriage whole at was a fal that Du



## CHAPTER XVIII.

By weakest means,  
And most unlikely instruments, full oft  
Are great events produced.

Mortel.

A SOLDIER lying desperately wounded on the field, after one of the conflicts with the Maories, had been taken to the hospital; there he had been recognized as Frederick Carew by a wounded man of another regiment. This wounded soldier had enlisted in an assumed name, into a regiment on the point of sailing for New Zealand, as Frederick Carew himself had done. He made such a revelation to Frederick Carew as brought him from the gates of death back to life; and when both men recovered from their wounds they were sent home to England and discharged; when Frederick lost not an instant in laying his plans, with what result so far we have seen. The soldier's real name was Philip Gray, and he had been ostler at the tavern where Mr. Carew had called on the night which ended so fatally for him.

On the night of the murder Jervis Chester occupied a room in the second story, the window of which opened on the long roof of a shed which sloped down in the stable yard. Between eight and nine o'clock, Gray who had just finished his work and extinguished his lantern, was looking the stable door, when he heard a slight noise in the direction of Chester's room. Raising his eyes, he saw by what little light there was from the sky, the window open and a man come out upon the roof, alide down it cautiously, drop himself into the yard, scale the fence, and make off in the direction of Holmby. Thinking, to use the ostler's own expression, he was up to some wild prank or intrigue, Gray, out of pure curiosity, determined to follow him. Taking good care, by crouching along the hedge, and keeping in the darkest shade, he managed to track him pretty closely through the wood. Then came the sound of a scuffle. He stood still and his heart leaped into his throat. Then a sudden light flashed upon his eyes—it was Jervis Chester throwing the light of a dark lantern on the prostrate form of Mr. Carew, while he rifled his pockets. At the sound of footsteps Jervis sprang to his feet and fled. Gray stood rooted to the spot and the murderer stumbled against him. Paralyzed with horror, Gray said he was a child in the powerful grasp of Chester. "I've done for the old man," he had said, "and now I'll do for you." Gray begged for mercy, and Chester bidding him to be silent, if he valued his life, dragged him away at a furious rate, still gripping him by the throat and threatening to strangle him if he breathed a whisper. When they had got to some distance from the scene, Chester made him swear a most solemn oath that he would never betray him, saying that he would find means of wreaking the most terrible vengeance on Gray if he dared to inform against him. Notwithstanding this oath, when an innocent man was accused of the murder, he made up his mind to brave the consequences, whatever they might be, and to denounce the real assassin. But the escape and supposed death of Frederick again threw him back into irresolution, and he still preserved his secret in his own bosom. But unable to remain in England with this terrible knowledge locked up in his heart, and almost maddening him, he determined to quit the country, and so had enlisted into a regiment ordered for immediate foreign service. In an attack on one of the native strongholds in New Zealand, he had been severely wounded, and placed in hospital; where, as we already know, he had recognized Frederick Carew.

Chester was placed upon his trial, convicted, and sentenced to be hanged. He exhibited on his trial and after conviction and sentence all the traits of a hardened criminal, ascended the fatal platform with an unflinching step, and met his death defiant and unrepentant.

Soon after these events, Eugene Vanderlyn was married to Marian Carew, the heiress of Holmby. Frederick Carew, shortly afterwards left England to travel.

The painful associations connected with Holmby, render it unlikely that it will ever again be the residence of any of the Carew family. Mr. and Mrs. Vanderlyn, accompanied by the bride's mother, are now making the tour of Europe.

Mr. John Morton has at last achieved a reputation as a musical composer and as a logical consequences, Miss Martha Wilson has become Mrs. Morton. In their neat house at Brighton, the sewing-machine presented by Marian Carew, when masquerading under the name of Julia Manners, occupies an honourable place, as a happy memento of the past.

No offers of his son and daughter-in-law could induce Old Vanderlyn to share in their splendours. He had tried to be a fashionable man once, and had failed signally. It was not till long after his son's marriage, that the old gentleman discovered that the whole story of the Duchess of Castleton's munificence was a fabrication to test Eugene's constancy—and that that Duchess of Castleton was no other than Marian,

and the duchess's pretended agent, Stanley, a man of business employed by her to carry out her plans. So he falls back on the real Duchess of Castleton, and his story of his son's saving her life is a staple narrative with him, always wound up by hearty anathemas on the forgetfulness and ingratitude of peeresses. Marian has presented him with a snug little farm, and Father Luke, liberally pensioned by Mrs. Vanderlyn, lives there with him. The old fiddler never tires of scraping on Marian's violin, and Vanderlyn declares that he is the best player in the world: "Talk of Ole Bull! why sir, Father Luke could play the Dutchman out of his boots." All foreigners are Dutchmen to Vanderlyn, though he comes of that stock himself, and ought to know better.

Philip Gray is Frederick Carew's confidential and constant companion.

And here, gentle reader, our romance of strange adventures ends. If it be full of marvellous vicissitudes, remember that the world we live in is a mighty volume filled with mysteries deep and dark, and joys and sorrows quite as vividly contrasted.

THE END.

## JULY.

Now is it beauty's culminating hour!  
Each fervid day the growth of nature feeds,  
Till lovely languor of the night succeeds,  
Drugged with the dewy breathing odorous flower!  
Night fans away the overflowing heat,  
Fresh roses flush the cheeks of early day,  
Whose balmy splendours winged warblers greet,  
With welling fountains of melodious lay!  
Lo! there the turtle dove, of favour sure,  
Alights before us in the shady rood;  
While the barn pigeon woos his love secure,  
And haunts with happy omen our abode!  
Here lilies breath aroma; and the rose  
With peerless bloom the path of summer strews!

R. P. F.

## UNCLE JOHN'S LEGACY.

## CHAPTER I.

"GIRLS, what do you think? We're to have a new arrival," said Mrs. Watson, coming suddenly into the breakfast-room where her two daughters, Clara and Maggie, were still lounging.

"Do tell us," cried Maggie, brightening up at the idea of something new to break the monotony of that cloudy morning.

"Did you say somebody was coming, mamma?" chimed Clara, venturing to raise her eyes for a moment, from her enticing novel, to her mother's face, and wondered if it was an enchanting fairy, dressed in scarlet and gold, come to entrap the heart of her Percy Stanton, leaving her to pine and die like the heroine of her bewitching tale.

Mrs. Watson seated herself comfortably, smoothing the folds of her morning cashmere, striving to do the same with the wrinkles on her brow, but not succeeding so well, as they were not merely caused by coming in contact with the furniture, but from fashion's scorching furnace. Turning to an open letter she read aloud:

"MRS. WATSON—Dear Madam,—As the carpenters and masons are turning Fairfield topey-harvey I will improve the opportunity of my brother's kind invitation, and spend the intervening time with you. Arrive on Thursday."

"Uncle John coming to Newton?" cried Clara, forgetting her novel, and actually raising herself on an elbow to stare in her mother's face with astonishment.

"Uncle John coming to Newton?" echoed Maggie, groaning inwardly at the thought.

What would her friend, Laura Sterling, say to that? How she would laugh at the odd figure her uncle would cut in her fashionable saloons. It was not to be thought of.

Clara searched for an expedient used by her heroine to divert herself from a rich, troublesome, old relative.

"My dears," said the mother, laying great stress on the last word, and using her most insinuating smile, "I own this visit is rather inopportune, but you must see the necessity as well as myself of making the best of it, and treating the old gentleman with marked attention."

"Oh," sighed Maggie, "then we must really put up with the presence of this horrid old man."

"My love, you must not use such strong language. Your uncle is a very respectable old gentleman, with fifty thousand in the bank, beside the broad lands of Fairfield, a snug little fortune in itself, and no prospect of marrying."

So saying, Mrs. Watson left the room.

"Oh, dear! what shall we do?" said Clara, as the door closed on the form of her mother.

"Do?" said Maggie, "why, our best to entertain him. Be silent martyrs to his recitals of rheumatism, dyspepsia, and corns. Pad the soles of our lightest slippers for fear of the slightest noise. Ugh! the old Hottentot."

"Who is the offending one you are heaping such bitter maledictions upon?" laughed a merry voice at the door.

And, apropos to the voice, appeared a straw hat, trimmed with blue, and a shower of sunny curls fell around a sweet face of intellectual beauty.

This was Cousin Kitty, of Corn Cottage; the only child of Mrs. Watson's youngest brother, Captain Floyd, who fell at Delhi.

"Oh, Cousin Kitty! we're in such a dreadful dilemma."

"Why, what's troubling you?"

Then the story was again repeated of the "horrid old man."

Kitty, during the recital, consoled herself that she had no old uncle, even if he were rich, to mortify her with his vulgar, awkward manners.

"Just to think, Cousin Kitty. There will be the Williamses here, and the Strathys. Isn't it too bad? All such respectable people."

"Yes; and there's the Stantons, too, so very, very genteel. What will they think?" sighed Clara.

This was too much for Kitty; she could not suppress the merriment that trembled in her merry blue eyes. The smile that wreathed her face broke out in a silvery laugh, despite all the pressure of the cherry lips.

Clara, of course, was very indignant, and wished "there could be found a kindred spirit to sympathize with her wrongs and sufferings."

Maggie called her cousin to examine some rose-trees she had purchased the preceding day, and we will leave them for the present, dear reader, as the conversation that followed our lady readers will intuitively understand, and will not be either interesting or useful to the opposite sex, and take a glimpse of the Watsons' past life.

John and Edward were the only sons of Mr. Watson, a well-to-do farmer, who lived in the large, white mansion on the hill, with the green vines running over the windows, and twining gracefully around the massive lattice-work of the portico.

He took great pride in his boys, and gave them all the advantages of education his means afforded. As they came of age the indignant parents deferred to their own decision the choice of a profession.

John preferred to follow in the footsteps of his father, while Edward opened a large mercantile establishment.

Time sped on, and Cupid began to interfere with the now wealthy merchant's accounts; and, to quiet the noisy little god, he took to his home Julia Floyd, a fashionably-refined, and, consequently, shallow-minded young lady; one ill-calculated to make his home happy.

In process of time came two lovely daughters, who promised fair to be as helpless wives as their mother had been before them (should that time ever arrive.)

John continued to reside at the old homestead, and when death had sundered the tie of "Home, sweet Home," taking first the father, then the mother, and she on whom he had fixed his affections marrying another, he closed the doors at Fairfield, and allowed the vines to grow high and thick, while he set out for foreign parts.

Tempted by the inviting climate of Australia, and golden prospects, he visited its mines, and there amassed a splendid fortune, probably the fifty thousand before referred to.

Then the heart, wearied from its first great sorrow, longed for the home of its childhood and dear, old, familiar faces. He had not seen his brother since his return; and, now, as Fairfield was being repaired, he determined to do so.

Early on Thursday morning John Watson's light country-carriage drew up at the Great Western Railway Station, and soon the old gentleman was ensconced amid the cushions of the comfortable carriage which was bearing him rapidly away from Fairfield to his brother's house.

The train stopped at Ashley, and two young gentlemen entered, and seated themselves directly in front of him, whilst he was buried in the luxury of the last parliamentary debate, the morning paper completely shielding his face from his fellow-travellers, and detaining him a willing listener to the following conversation:

"You have grown quite sentimental of late, Alfred. Now, do be honest, then, and confess that you are in love."

Uncle John rattled the paper very nervously in his hand.

"In love! with whom I should like to know?" answered the other, at the same time tearing to pieces a pink rose that emitted a fragrance even from the de-

stroyer's fingers. "Let me tell you, Ned, there are few girls in Newton I would bestow a second thought upon."

"Oh, don't attempt to deny the fact, or lay such stress on the personal pronoun. It looks egotistical, Alfred. I heard last night, from Fred Stewart, that you were actually engaged to pretty Kitty Floyd; and, by Jove, I thought you a fortunate dog. You need not be ashamed of your choice, for I am more than half in love with the young lady myself, although not personally acquainted, my efforts for an introduction being fruitless."

"Indeed! Well, I must confess that she is pretty, but, as to my engagement, that is absurd, I, preferring to pay my addresses to simple Maggie Walton, who, I understand, expects a handsome twenty thousand or so, in solid cash, from an old uncle, besides inheriting a share of her father's splendid estate. Kitty is a handsome girl, but, unless she brings a fine fortune, is no wife for me."

Uncle John on hearing this, was actually so indiscreet as to peep over the side of the paper, and closely scrutinize his neighbour.

"I did not think, Alfred, that you were so mercenary."

"Mercenary! It is only common prudence. I have heard of love in a cottage, but I never saw it reduced to practice, and have no idea of making myself a specimen for the public good."

"And upon what footing do you now stand with Kitty?"

"Oh, the best in the world! Of course, I can't help the girl from loving me, yet Corn Cottage is not a sufficient inducement when twenty thousand is to be had for the mere asking."

Uncle John winced under this; but the conversation had now become too interesting for him to interrupt it.

"I do not think it quite right for the old gentleman; but how could he help it? they would talk so he could hear."

The dialogue continued.

"But how is it possible for you to view such a lovely creature as Kitty Floyd with such philosophic indifference?"

"You misunderstand me, Ned. I admire Kitty, but would not marry her without a penny."

"Then you don't deserve to have such a treasure, even if she had a fortune."

The old gentleman could scarce refrain from jumping up and slapping the speaker on the back in delight.

"Oh, that's all very fine! Give me the plain, common sense which provides for the future without compromising the present. I have no fortune of my own."

"Well, you won't live on mine, young man!" came from between a pair of closed teeth and the newspaper.

"Newton!—Newton!" cried out the porters.

Uncle John contrived, on pretence of searching for his umbrella, to keep his back to the young men. A smile rested on his good-natured countenance, a smile of deep meaning. What it meant we will know hereafter.

#### CHAPTER II.

THE next morning the sun shone bright and clear in the two French windows at Corn Cottage. Kitty was sitting on an ottoman at her mother's feet, plying the needle on a piece of fancy embroidery; the sunlight falling over her slight figure, and tinting, with a pencil of gold, the various hues in the neat Brussels carpet amidst whose roses and lilies peeped a tiny slipper.

Her mother, Mrs. Floyd, was a middle-aged, gentle lady, whose thirty-five summers had scarce left a shadow on her fair brow. None could have styled her a beauty, but the sweet expression that new bore a slight shade of anxiety, as she turned from the open book to gaze on the lovely creature at her feet, would have made up for any deficiency in regularity of features.

For Kitty, this morning had been one of innumerable trials. The bright steel would continue to penetrate the pink fingers, and the flames would tangle, despite her many desperate attempts to keep them separate.

"Mamma, dear mamma, I have given you pain!" sobbed Kitty, as she noticed the tears gather in her mother's eye.

"No, no, child! Grieve not for that; I was only thinking how soon I should lose you. How soon Kitty would be my Kitty no longer—but the child, the devotee of fashion."

"Why, mamma! how can you say so? Who else have I to love but you? Father, brother, sister have I none; you are my all. And will I not always have my mamma near to advise and direct, thus saving me many a pang that others less fortunate would have to

undergo?" Kitty answered, sweetly, smiling through her tears. "It is a lesson that we all have to undergo sooner or later, and why not now, when I have that sweet counsel to guide me?"

"You are right, my child."

"And my aunt's ball will afford me that opportunity which ear limited means would not allow."

"Yes; your aunt and cousins are very wealthy; but happiness does not always consist in being wealthy Kitty."

"It certainly does not in their respect; for, even now, when they ought to be so happy, they are in trouble by the visit of uncle's brother."

Mrs. Floyd, her face an ashy pallor, started suddenly to an upright position, fastening her gaze with an eager questioning look on her daughter, who essayed to speak, but the fright was too much; the words died away on her powerless lips.

"When did you hear this, Kitty?" gasped the mother.

Sinking back again in her chair, and drawing her shawl closer around her, she bade Kitty draw the curtains, then come and tell her all she knew of the intended visit.

The affectionate girl did instantly as desired, and, happy in the thought of driving away her melancholy for a few minutes, gave a full account of Uncle John's charms so beautifully portrayed by her cousins, interspersed by humorous remarks, which never failed before to draw an approving smile, but now seemed to add to her sternness.

"No gratitude! heartless! 'Tis but another of the many deceptions practised by the skilled fashionables on Truth and Goodness."

"Ah, you forget," laughed Kitty, "that the victim in question is old and experienced, quite as likely to be steeped in the wickedness of the world as my aunt and cousins."

"But which I assure you is not the case."

Kitty glanced up inquiringly.

"Then you know Mr. Watson?"

"I have heard of him. Shall I tell you what I heard? It is a cruel story, but from which may be drawn a useful moral."

"Oh, that would be delightful!"

Her mother's stories were always interesting, but doubly so this morning, as a weight oppressed her spirits which she could not shake off; in short, Kitty was in love with Alfred Burke. He had been absent from Newton for a few days; she had looked for his return on Thursday, but he had not come, and no note arrived explaining his absence; hence her agitation.

She felt angry and hurt at his silence; but she tried to forget it by nestling her face in her mother's lap, and listening to the story that she told.

Mary and Belle were the oldest daughters of Mr. Arnold, a clergyman residing in a little village not very far distant from Winchester, and as unlike in disposition as it was possible for sisters to be.

Belle was quiet and unassuming, the very counterpart of the gentle being she called mother.

Mary was wild and playful, at once the torment and delight of every one.

At the age of sixteen we find her untamed as ever, and in a fair way of being spoiled, had not Providence called her from her village sport to attend the death-bed of a favourite aunt, Mrs. Sterling, her father's only sister.

For three long, weary weeks after Mary's arrival, she bent, with unceasing diligence, over the sufferer's pillow.

Mr. Sterling's farm adjoined that of Fairfield, and daily a message was sent from the hall inquiring the health of the invalid. The messenger was always John, and it was not unnatural that Mary, when fatigued with weary watching, would long for the time to come when he would appear, bringing new books, or something equally as interesting, to while away the time when the patient slept.

The day of sorrow came at length, and the spirit of Rhoda Sterling returned to the God who gave it.

It was a bright afternoon in July. Mary and the bereaved family were inconsolable. If the Watsons had before proved themselves kind neighbours, they were now tender friends.

The summer waned to autumn. It was not necessary Mary should remain longer, and yet the idea of returning caused her a pang she could not smother.

She had not mentioned her intention of going home to John till the afternoon before she intended to start. They were seated on the bank of the little trout stream. John was holding a basket of tempting red berries towards her, when, remembering her journey, she said:

"No; take them away; I don't want to eat them as they will, most probably, be the last I shall ever gather at Fairfield."

"Are you going away?"

The young man evinced no surprise, as Mary intended he should, so, quelling her chagrin, she answered, haughtily:

"Yes; I am going home, Mr. Watson, and very glad to get there, too, among my old friends, whom I shall know the better how to appreciate from my long absence."

John Watson then smiled a quiet smile; and Mary, vexed beyond endurance, arose to go.

"No, Mary Arnold," he said, taking both her hands in his, and seating her beside him again, "you are not glad to go away, and I am not glad to hear you say so. Do you know I think we love each other very much? And now will you promise to become my wife, and return to help me gather sunshine as well as strawberries the remainder of my life?"

Mary's hands trembled in his earnest grasp, and she murmured in a low, almost inaudible voice:

"Yes."

The answer confirmed that he was forgiven for his coolness, and accepted as her lover.

Their fates were sealed, their paths marked out to be travellers together in time to eternity; and, when Mary returned home, it was only for two years. Her companions received her with open arms, and she was again plunged in all the gaieties a minister's daughter could possibly partake of. It was not without its consequent evils.

There was in the village at the time a young Dr. Rivers, a gentleman of pleasing manners and affable temper. Mary and he were soon friends, she, finding in his accounts of foreign lands a never-failing source of amusement, and he, delighted with the child-like frankness which characterized her every movement.

Belle, the sober, steady Belle, saw the forthcoming storm arising from such an intimate connection with Dr. Rivers when her heart and hand were another, and urged her to make known her engagement. To all these expostulations she turned a deaf ear, laughing outright at her sister's fears. She received regularly a long epistle from Fairfield, and as regularly another of the same nature found its way into John Watson's hands.

"He was very busy," Mary would say, "but will soon be here, then all might be explained. Pray allow me a little freedom till that time arrives."

But Belle would shake her head, and try to convince her if she considered her engagement with Mr. Watson infringing on her freedom or peace of mind it was not a true union of souls, and, therefore, should be broken.

"Oh, Belle! how can you say so?" Mary would sobbingly reply, "when I love him so very, very much? I'm sure he cannot expect me to sit moping in the corner when he is not here, and not enjoy myself. Oh, no! I cannot think you are in earnest."

One day the expected missive arrived, but was edged with black. Poor Mary's heart failed her till the familiar handwriting assured her it was not John.

She broke the seal and read. It was a simple story, and simply told. Mrs. Watson was dead; had died very suddenly; died blessing her children's union—Mary and John.

Mary closed the letter and wept aloud. When she had gained sufficient calmness, she read on.

"The old house looks so lonely now, I want you, Mary; I want my singing-bird to ornament my lonely palace. What day may I come for you? This heart so long for companionship and sympathy. Say, will you come now, darling?"

As she read these entrancing lines, a chill crept over her heart, grappling with its affections, and setting her love for John at defiance.

Not being gifted with sufficient moral courage, she did not try to put this aside, and thus save herself very much misery, but merely to make herself believe it was not unwillingness to comply with his request, but a natural abhorrence of leaving home and friends. Yet the more she battled with this conviction the stronger it forced itself upon her. She wrote in reply:

"Indeed, dear John, I cannot now become your wife. I am too young, too inexperienced, to take upon myself such sacred duties, and it would break my heart to think I should add to your misery instead of happiness. At the end of those two years, the term of our engagement, you may then, but not before, come for Mary."

Then she spoke such words of comfort and cheer which her affectionate heart dictated, and forced herself to believe that it was all true.

From the posting of that letter dates the misery of the hitherto happy pair. A weight seemed all the time oppressing Mary's feelings. To crush these she plunged deeper and deeper into the gaieties that offered.

In his great love for Mary, John freely forgave her, blaming his own selfishness in wishing to tear her from home and friends so soon.

Not long after this, Mary was sitting in the little



front parlour at the personage, sketching; and, while the busy pencil was industriously applied to the paper, she hummed a low French air.

Dr. Rivers was just passing the room—little Willie was very ill, and, in great trepidation, he had been summoned to save the life of the little one. With the familiarity of an old acquaintance he pushed the door open and entered.

"Oh, thou visitor of death and sickness! haunt ye not my waking visions!" said Mary, holding up her hands in mimic abhorrence.

"That pretty gesture alone," he added, bowing low, "were well worth all the trouble of learning the profession."

A dim perception of wrong overshadowed the young girl's mind; the tears rose to her eyes, but she determined she should not see her sorrow. She answered in the same light, giddy strain.

"Ah, dissenter! value you your services so lightly? If so, methinks that they cannot be of much account."

"They are naught, Mary," he answered, with one of his most insinuating glances, "when compared with one of your own sweet smiles."

"Avant! flatterer."

And she waved her hand in the style of a queen dismissing a subject.

Quick as thought Rivers seized it, and bestowed a kiss on its peony tips.

What was it made Mary glance up at that moment? And what was it made the little hand turn cold in the doctor's grasp?

Standing in the doorway, his features white and rigid as if in death, his eyes glaring fiercely at her, stood John Watson.

With a wild scream she fell fainting forward. Rivers sprang to her assistance, but John, with one blow of his powerful fist, laid him level with the floor. Then, taking the inanimate form of his betrothed in his arms, he laid her gently on the sofa, where the breezes of heaven would fan her cheek. He waited an instant to see that life was not quite extinct, and then turned to leave the apartment as Belle entered to inquire the cause of the uproar. Rivers had recovered his feet, and, as Belle opened the door, he darted out of the room, jumped upon his horse, and hurried away.

"Sir," said Belle, stopping before John, "be kind enough to explain the meaning of this."

"It means, madam," said John, sternly, not deigning a glance at her, "it means that I am John Watson, the affianced husband of your faithless girl (he could not bear to say Mary) whom I came here to-day to see, when I interrupted a very love-like conversation between her and your flying gallant. You are in possession of all I can tell you."

And, bowing, he would have passed out, but Belle sprang forward, and placed her back against the door.

"No; you cannot to go yet," she exclaimed; "in behalf of my sister I speak. Consider what you are doing. You are hasty and unkind."

"Unkind," he murmured, his whole frame shaking with suppressed emotion. "Good powers! my greatest fault is I have been too lenient."

"It is indeed so," said Mary, entering and throwing herself at his feet.

Belle slipped quietly from the apartment.

"Hear ye," continued Mary, "hear what I have to say, and then spurn me from you if you will. I have been imprudent; but, believe me, John, it was not intentional."

He would have raised her from her humiliating position, but she shrank from his touch, exclaiming:

"No, no! Let me stay till you say you believe me. Forgiveness I cannot expect."

He bent one glance on her, so full of tender compassion, but it was only for an instant. His eyes assumed their stony look, his lips their stern rigidity, while his voice sounded cold and hollow as he replied:

"Explanations are useless, Mary Arnold! To-morrow I return your letters, and demand my own. You are free. Henceforth, we are strangers."

He turned on his heel and left the room.

"Oh John! John! you have killed me!" came in a wild wail.

Then all was still.

He passed through the little garden; that sound rang in his ears—that "John! you have killed me!" faced him at every turn. He had his hand on the gate, the gate that a few moments before he had passed in such a different frame of mind. His feelings overcame him; his heart smote him; he would at least go back again to that little parlour, and see that all was right. Perhaps she had swooned: perhaps even now the spirit had fled. Had he indeed killed her? Was he her murderer?

Quicker than he came he returned; and, pushing Belle aside, restored Mary to consciousness, and, also, forgave her.

Thus, the second time, they were united, and John

returned to his home to work and wait. She, his guiding star, shone clear and bright before him.

How was it with Mary? One would have supposed the last would have been a lesson she could not forget. And, supposing her love for him to be small, this trial of his magnanimity would cause her to look upon him more favourably.

Not so, indeed. When the excitement had subsided the old feeling came back again even stronger than ever. To the world she appeared the same joyous, gay creature as before, but, at times, the tears would start, and she could not quell the rising sigh.

It was while she was in one of these moods, at the house of a friend, she became acquainted with Clarence Gordon. They were alone in the conservatory, examining the flowers, when she yielded to the weight of sorrow: She leaned her head forward, and wept silently. His tones calmed her, and stemmed the raging storm.

That night, when she sought her pillow, it was not to sleep, and from that time Gordon was always with her. No one could so well choose a plant or book; no one could so well use his pencil for her amusement as Gordon.

There is little more to state. Mary's letters to John grew shorter and shorter, till they dwindled down to a tiny note—very short, so short I can repeat it now.

"DEAR JOHN,—The dream is past. I can never be your wife. Soon I will be Mrs. Gordon. God forgive me; I cannot ask you to do so. "MARY ARNOLD."

Four months' illness for John Watson followed the reading of this note, but he recovered.

Mary awoke too late from the fancies of an unsound mind to realize the treasure she had lost, and herself the wife of another.

### CHAPTER III.

THE eventful night at length arrived.

Kitty sat in her own room, one arm thrown carelessly around Carlo, the house-dog's neck, while she half-reclined in an easy chair, her dreamy gaze fixed on the carpet at her feet.

It was now nearly time to commence the tedious duties of the toilet, but Kitty had positively forbidden Nettie's approaching her till she should ring. She would be alone, the vivid carnation coming and going on her fair brow.

Ah, Kitty, Kitty, those thoughts are on the gay scene only as connected with a still more engrossing subject. It is of Alfred Burke, the elegant and fascinating Alfred Burke, a being you imagine you love very dearly. Already are you plunged into that sea of trouble your tender parent warned you against—for he loves you not. Those pretty attentions directed to you were merely idle gallantries. You are naught when compared with the vast wealth of your rich Cousin Maggie.

It were hard to say how many aerial castles she had constructed during the last hour, but, however wild and improbable they were, she concluded to wait; the sober natural thought as she arose to summon her little maid, was:

"I shall at least see him!"

It was with a feeling akin to impatience Mrs. Floyd awaited the appearance of her daughter, and was just preparing herself to summon her when Kitty entered, enveloped, as it were, in a cloud of blue and white lace, a dress peculiarly adapted to her fairy figure and soft, rose-tinted complexion. Moving softly to her mother's side, she imparted a warm kiss on her cheek.

"God bless you, my child!" was the murmured reply as the widow, with trembling fingers, undid the clasp of an antique casket, and took from its hiding-place of soft satin a bracelet of excessive beauty, a very rare and magnificent opal, surrounded by splendid rubies.

Kitty was delighted and surprised; but Mrs. Floyd simply said:

"It was a present when I was a girl."

The Watson's family carriage now rolled up to the door, and, adjusting her wraps, Kitty kissed her mother, and sprang lightly down-stairs. Secure that all her hopes, her aspirations were on the point of fulfilment, she sank back with a sigh of relief.

The Watson mansion was in a blaze of light; carriages coming and discharging their precious burdens, and as rapidly rolling away again.

Carrie and Maggie, in the most approved style, were assisting their mother in welcoming their guests, when Kitty entered, leaning on the arm of her uncle.

With that graceful, buoyant step, so peculiar to her, she crossed the room to her aunt's side. Then followed a confused idea or being introduced to a great many, and speaking to her aunt, the brightness of whose jewels compelled her to bend her eyes to the floor.

Her excessive beauty and engaging manners soon drew around her a crowd of admirers, all eager to

secure her good graces, also the frowns of the kind-hearted, manoeuvring mammas and husband-seekers.

Miss Laura Sterling, the daughter of the wealthy banker, and hitherto acknowledged *belle* of Newton, contracted her finely-chiselled brows as she saw such a dangerous rival in the field, and doubled her fascinations in order to retain at her side Sir Ingram Ingrams, an obscure noble, whom Mrs. Watson, after a series of manoeuvres unknown to her friends, but not the less interesting on that account, had succeeded in entrapping into an invitation.

But of no avail was the artful glance, or exceedingly bewitching smile; for, as the full and measured tones of the band swelled the air with its delicious melody, with a slight apology he moved away, and sought Kitty's be-jewelled hand for the forthcoming dance.

From that time she was her openly-avowed enemy, following her with malignant glances of deep hatred that fell harmlessly on the defenceless head of our heroine, who, leaning on the arm of her gallant and distinguished partner sought the floor to join in the quadrille now forming.

As she did so her eye caught sight of a pair a short distance off; her Cousin Maggie was one of these, and the other form was not unfamiliar, she thought. Her heart gave one little bound as Maggie's companion turned to address her; for, as he did so, the light fell across the light-brown moustache and regular features of Alfred Burke.

She was happy now. The rich blood mounted to cheek and brow; the blue eyes danced and sparkled with light, while the laugh and repartee sprang readily to her lips.

Several times she caught him looking at her, and she imagined to herself how readily he would seek her when the quadrille was concluded. How eagerly he would ask her hand for the next set, and how gladly she would bestow it.

A pang shot through her sensitive heart; for, as she continued to watch them, she noticed with what lover-like tenderness he bent over her; and it could not be anything very unpleasant that he whispered so low as to call forth such smiling replies.

The quadrille was ended, and Sir Ingram, in offering his partner his arm, was very much astonished at her paleness.

"You are ill. The heat of this room is oppressive. Let us seek a cooler atmosphere."

Kitty murmured that she was only slightly fatigued, and allowed him to lead her from the room to a small sitting-room opening on the conservatory.

She threw herself on the low, crimson couch, while Sir Ingram went in search of refreshments, and tried to think calmly of what she had just observed. Ere she had half-subdued her agitated feelings she heard voices approaching; and, not caring that they should see her, she hastily raised the purple draperies which hung before a recess in a corner of the room, and sprang behind them when the party entered.

"Do let us rest here a moment," exclaimed not an unmusical voice. "I am completely exhausted. The heat in that drawing-room is so oppressive."

"Permit me to restore your drooping spirits," exclaimed the clear, soft accents of a well-remembered voice, whose tones caused every chord in Kitty's heart to vibrate.

Glancing through a small opening in the curtain, which commanded a view of the apartment, she perceived the object of her thoughts.

On her late seat washer Cousin Maggie; and, bending over, so that his warm breath fanned her cheek, while before her he waved his perfumed handkerchief, was Alfred Burke.

Oh, what volumes of horror that one glance revealed!

Her faculties were about to give way; but she strained every nerve, and compelled herself to listen to his words.

"Ah, I pray you not to expose your delicate constitution to such fatiguing exertions," returned Maggie, playfully putting out her hand, and catching the snowy fabric.

"A lifetime spent thus would be all I ask," he said, taking her hand in both of his.

Maggie gave a little affected start, and then replied:

"Mr. Burke, I don't understand you?" though her face belied the assertion.

"Shall I say it plainer, Maggie? I love you."

"And then it is not true about your being engaged to Kitty Floyd?"

He started as if an adder had stung him; but, quickly regaining his ease, he replied:

"No, believe me. I have met the young lady once or twice."

"And she has mistaken your attentions for a more tender sentiment? I understand you now."

Poor Kitty thought her heart would burst; for,

added to the knowledge that she was not loved, in return, was contempt and derision.

Nothing but her perilous position sustained her; so, pressing her hand against her loudly-throbbing heart, she waited till they had departed; then, creeping back to her former seat, she gave way to the bitter emotion she could no longer conceal or restrain, by laying her face in her hands, and sobbing aloud.

A slight noise beside her caused her to look up, and she perceived an old gentleman standing before her with a very benevolent expression resting on his countenance.

"Forgive the intermeddling importuness of an old man; but, my dear young lady, you appear to be in trouble."

Kitty's face flushed a deep crimson at the idea of any one being witness to her grief; and, hastily rising, she would have left the room had he not interfered in so gentle and kind a manner that she no farther opposed him, but remained.

"Thank you," he said, in a voice that trembled slightly. "Thank you for the confidence that you place in me; confidence that will not be abused. I will not pain you by asking the cause of your grief, which I know already."

Kitty started.

"Your name, young lady, is Kitty Floyd, and the young gentleman that has just left the room, in company with Miss Watson, is Alfred Burke. A well-matched pair, I assure you, and you are happily rid of him."

Kitty's face again flushed crimson, as she promptly replied:

"It is all too true what you say; but please not to speak so of Miss Watson, who is my cousin; and I can listen to nothing against her."

"I also am related to the young lady, delighting in the appellation of uncle; but here comes your partner with something more refreshing than my society. Adieu! We will meet again."

So saying, Uncle John left as quietly as he came.

Sir Ingram made a long apology for his prolonged absence. He had just neared the door when some rough-looking old man had pushed against him, causing him to upset the contents of the tray on Miss Sterling's splendid dress, and it had taken some time to repair the mischief.

Of course Kitty freely forgave him in her heart, thanking "the rough old man" for so kindly interposing between her and what would have been a very mortifying interview with Sir Ingram.

Her partner detected no difference; for, so soon had been poured the healing balm of sympathy, the effect was instantaneous and certain. A perfect calm pervaded where tumultuous passions had a short time before held sway. The cooling air invigorated her, and sent the warm bloom back to her cheek and brow, and the rest of the evening passed "merry as a marriage bell."

At an advanced hour the carriages began again to come and go as before.

Kitty stood cloaked and veiled. When her carriage was announced, Alfred Burke, who had been listlessly leaning over the staircase, sprang forward and "begged the honour of handing Miss Floyd to the carriage."

A contemptuous, indignant reply rose to her lips; but, looking up, she encountered the glance of her kind friend of the evening; and, thanking Mr. Burke "for the intended favour," with a distant bow coldly turned away.

To fill the measure of the latter's mortification Uncle John unceremoniously pushed past him, exclaiming:

"It is rather too late to renew your acquaintance with Miss Floyd."

Then, offering his arm to Kitty, they moved away, leaving him biting his lips with vexation.

"Burke, do tell us who that old bear is," said a fashionably-dressed young man, who had witnessed the whole scene with very lively demonstrations of satisfaction.

"Some rich old Hotentot, a distant relative of the family, I believe."

"I suspected it was something of the sort when I saw the lamb-like gentleness with which you suffered the onset. Burke! Burke! gold is then thy god."

"A god whom we all worship, you among the rest," returned the other, angrily, as he moved hastily away.

"It was late in the morning when Kitty awoke, and, hastily dressing, she sought her mother's room where breakfast was generally served; and, while she sipped their hot coffee, she recounted the events of the evening before."

Nothing did she reserve, nothing did she omit, even Mr. Alfred Burke, and the wild fancies she wasted on him, and dwelling with grateful remembrance on the kindness of Uncle John.

Breakfast over, and Kitty noticed the casket open

out upon her mother's stand. She took it up to examine the minute workmanship, when something glittering on the lid attracted her attention, and she read the name of "John Watson."

The mystery was all revealed. Mrs. Floyd was the heroine of her own story. So new, so strange and bewildering was this intelligence that Kitty was wrapped in astonishment. She did not notice her mother leave the room; she heard no one talking down-stairs; nor was she aware of the presence of a stranger till she was clasped in a bearish embrace, and a deep voice said:

"Rejoice with me in my deep joy, 'e'en as I sympathized with you in your sorrow."

It was Uncle John; and, by his side, smiling in her tears, was Mrs. Floyd.

In a fortnight there was a quiet wedding at Corn Cottage, and Kitty, now Mrs. Edward Walton, received Uncle John's legacy.

There was great excitement when this became known, and the papers teemed with a breach of promise between Miss Maggie Watson and Alfred Burke. The latter was obliged to take the bride with a small portion of her "father's splendid estate." C. C.

## ANCIENT AND MODERN HUMBUGS OF THE WORLD.

No. 4.—DAVID PRINCE MILLER, SHOWMAN.

In 1842, I made the acquaintance of the subject of this sketch. He was then manager of a theatre in Glasgow, and it was in that city where I first met him. He was a large-stout Englishman, who started life as a penny showman; in which line, after many vicissitudes, he was successful; but aspiring for something higher than his genius would warrant, he started a theatre. Mr. Macready, Fanny Kemble, Mrs. Charles Mathews (*née* Madame Vestris), and other dramatic stars, shed their effulgence here; and when I first met him, he was in the zenith of success. He often called at my hotel, and amused me by relating rich anecdotes of his wandering showman life. Indeed, he seemed far happier and more at home while exhibiting his powers of imitation, and showing his dexterity in sleight-of-hand tricks, than as a knight of the "sock and buskin." For an hour at a time would he sit and play with General Tom Thumb in our private parlour, exhibiting such astounding feats of legerdemain as caused the little general to open his eyes and mouth with admiration and astonishment. He rollicked with delight while he related the funny and ludicrous adventures which he had met with in his gipsy-like peregrinations, from fair to fair and horse-race to horse-race throughout the United Kingdom.

Mr. Miller was *au fait* to all the illusions of showdom, and if there was any trick or deception in the whole range of "black art" which he could not accomplish himself, he could at least explain how it was done. I confess that he enlightened my mind to a large extent upon the profound mysteries of this fascinating subject, and the American Museum owes several of its successes to hints obtained from this "prince" of showmen.

While I was in Glasgow, I heard of a couple of remarkably fat Scotch boys in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen; and at the first convenient opportunity, I started after them. Finding them "all my fancy painted them," I contracted with their mother to take them to America on an engagement of three years. I brought them to Glasgow, and at the suggestion of Mr. Miller, I engaged him to teach them the art and mystery of "second sight" in fifteen lessons. He did the job perfectly; and for years these obese Scotch lads, dressed in their native tartans, travelled through the United States, exhibiting their immense proportions, and astonishing their patrons with their "Millerite" powers of describing invisible things. At this time, however, the show-business had not assumed that sublimity of impudence which in these latter days dignifies tricks of legerdemain, as "manifestations" of departed "spirits," whether celestial or diabolical. All that was claimed for these "second-sight" boys was, that their extraordinary powers were a "mystery" to outsiders.

Mr. Miller's conversation abounded with interest and amusement. He said he regarded the illusions of the penny showmen as light offences, certainly more amusing than vicious; in fact, he considered the extravagant tales told by this class of itinerants in regard to their exhibitions as the most amusing thing about them; and that most persons who pay their penny upon entering those places make up their minds to be "taken in," and many would feel disappointed were it not so.

Before commencing business for himself, he travelled as doorkeeper to a penny show, which consisted of a giantess, a dwarf, and an Albino lady.

While at Leeds, in Yorkshire, a rival manager hired away these three curiosities, thus leaving Miller's employer without anything to show.

Some years previous to this, he had had a black giantess, who, owing to her getting married, left the concern. He still retained her dress, and now proposed that Miller should personate the black giantess, who was about his size. As Miller and his employer were both short of money, and had possessed "great expectations" from the Leeds Fair, the proposition was accepted, and he was soon attired in a fantastic dress, of gay colours, duly decorated with feathers, beads, &c. As he was exhibited as the "great black giantess," of course his face and hands had to undergo the usual negro-mustrel operation of being blackened with burnt cork and grease.

A number of visitors expressed their doubts as to his being what he alleged, and one drunken fellow attempted to take liberties with the African giantess, but her ladyship repelled the insult by knocking the fellow down, and thus escaped exposure.

Miller was so successful here that he soon started a small show of his own, consisting principally of sleight-of-hand tricks.

All patrons of the penny shows in England have witnessed the gastronomic experiment of making pancakes in a hat. This is done with the aid of a tin dish, slyly slipped into the bottom of the hat. Miller was a proficient at this trick; but on one occasion the tin was unfortunately forgot to be inserted. "I commenced," says he, "breaking the eggs into the jar, and with all the assurances the conjuring fraternity generally assume, poured it into," as I supposed, the tin dish within the hat. It was never my system to look into the hat, for fear of exciting suspicion, and I never doubted but the dish was inserted within; but what was my consternation when I did look into the hat, to find that the uncooked-pancake was spread all over the lining—my attendant having forgotten to slip the dish in! The fact was, a curious old gentleman had so bothered me and my assistant, that he forgot to put it in. I looked very spoony for a few seconds, but I considered the loss of a hat nothing to them, and I acknowledged the mistake that had been made, exposed how the trick should have been done, and laid the blame upon the shoulders of the old gentleman, who really was the cause. As I expected, they were more delighted at this than they were at the most successful of my experiments."

Another well-known feat is the Walking Shilling. Says Miller:

"To make a shilling walk requires a little preparation, though some people make them fly fast enough, and without much trouble. Get a long hair from the head of a female; to one end of it attach a piece of shoemaker's wax, fasten the other to a pin, pin it to the bottom of your waistcoat, letting the piece of wax dangle about at the full length of the hair. If you wish to perform it as a trick, ask some one to lend you a shilling. During the time they are getting the shilling, endeavour to put the wax between your finger and thumb. Take the shilling and stick the wax to it; which may be easily done while you are examining it, pretending to see whether it is a good one. Take care to fix the wax to the under part of the shilling, so that it may not be seen, then throw it carelessly on the table. Move your body from it, and of course it will follow you; hold your hand on a level with the edge of the table, and the shilling walks into it. With practice you may make it walk from one hand to the other, or throw it into a glass of water and cause it to walk out. When you return the shilling to its owner, you can easily pick off the wax with your finger-nail."

Among the numerous shifts to which necessity reduced Mr. Miller, one was to deliver the bills of a travelling physician, who called himself Dr. de Magno.

"This fellow, notwithstanding his kindness to me," says Miller, "was the most cruel impostor I ever met. His mode of doing business was thus:—Guided by a chalk-mark which I had made on a conspicuous place near the door upon the delivery of the bill, he would thunder a double-rap at the door. Having introduced himself, he would express a hope that all were in health; he would then inquire whether his servant had left one of his bills.

"He would accost an elderly-looking person (when he had observed a young woman in the house whom he supposed to be a daughter), and after introducing himself as usual with 'All well here, I hope,' would request a private conversation for a few minutes; which request having been granted, he would inquire: 'Pray, is that young woman your daughter?' The reply being probably in the affirmative, he would continue: 'Well, don't be alarmed, but that young woman is in the first stage of consumption!' 'Indeed, sir, she is in excellent health,' might be the reply. 'Don't tell me,' says Doctor Magno; 'I have had too much experience in these cases not to know my business. I have made consumption my most particular study; in fact, I never lost a patient in its first stages, which, I believe,



is more than any other man in my profession can assert. This bottle—now introducing his medicine—is invaluable; I usually sell it at ten shillings; but you'll excuse me for making the remark, but you don't seem to be over rich, and as I consider it a pity so fine a young woman should be sacrificed for a trifle, you shall have it for five shillings! And thus he generally succeeded in obtaining a sale, and often got five shillings for a bottle of trash not worth a penny."

Disgusted with this charlatan, Miller divulged his imposture to a poor family whom he was about to victimize, and the result was a separation between them.

Of the desperate struggle made by strolling players to get up any decent show of theatrical properties, Miller related to me the following incident, which he assured me actually occurred at a small town in Yorkshire:

"Previous to the commencement of the performance, the place, of course, had to be lighted; but, although I had been very economical in my outlay, there was only one penny left in the treasury, with which we purchased a candle. This served to throw a light upon the movements of the first robber (the money-taker); but what was to be done for candles, as the room was in darkness?"

"At length a gentleman presented himself, and tendered sixpence for a seat in the pit. Pit and gallery were both alike, being composed of forms which we had borrowed from a schoolmaster, on the promise of returning them next morning before school hours. The sixpence I seized with alacrity, and immediately called out: "Dear me, what a time the boy is gone for the candles; here, go and fetch a pound; he'll be all night!" addressing myself to Mr. Black, who, by grins and sly winks, seemed to congratulate me upon having procured the means of lighting the place.

"The pound of candles having arrived, they were very expeditiously stuck into a wooden chandelier, constructed of six pieces of lath nailed across, and nails driven in for sockets. One gentleman, who sat under it, would be saved the expense of bear's grease for a long period, if he had been accustomed to use that article, his head having been well anointed with melted tallow, which at intervals dropped upon him; his coat receiving a greater share than might be deemed desirable. A numerous party assembled; in fact, I was very much elated with my success, having nearly two pounds in the house, which, considering all circumstances, was excellent business."

These and numerous other anecdotes which Miller related to me, he subsequently published in a book which purported to be a history of his life.

Although, as I said at the commencement of this chapter, Miller became successful as a penny-showman before opening a theatre in Glasgow, it was easy to see that if he could not forget the low tricks belonging to his former sphere, his failure was certain when he attempted to cater for the intelligent classes; and so the event proved.

Miller got into a law-suit with another Glasgow manager, whose patent he had infringed; and the result was, he lost all his money, and was thrown into goal.

He subsequently built a large booth in Glasgow Green, exactly opposite the theatre lately tenanted by him, and commenced his former style of penny-shows; but his new building was one night suddenly destroyed by fire, and he once more began a wandering life, and probably even now occasionally makes his appearance at the principal fairs and horse-races.

Mr. Miller's non-success is but another among ten thousand instances where men have attempted to make a living out of the public without returning an equivalent for the public's money. Such attempts end in utter failure in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred. All experience proves that the manufacturer, the merchant, or the showman who affords the most for the money received, is in the end the most successful man.

P. T. BARNUM.

(To be continued.)

#### THE LORD MAYOR AND THE TOWER OF LONDON.

—It is a fact but little known that the "pass-word" of the Tower for each day in every three months is quarterly sent to the Lord Mayor of the City of London, under the sign-manual of the Sovereign, to enable him at any time, day or night, even though the guard is set, to pass through the gates to see the governor, or for any other public duty. The Lord Mayor going out of office, communicates the password for the remainder of the three months to his successor.

A FORTUNATE SUGGESTION.—Lord Chelmsford told the following story at a meeting in the town which gave him his title:—"No fewer than three hundred patents are issued annually for various inventions; and it is impossible to say how soon, by the falling of a single spark, the flame of invention may be kindled

in any man. I remember a curious instance of this: A friend at the bar was engaged in a nautical case. A vessel exposed to a gale had been thrown upon her beam ends. The barrister, ignorant of such matters, asked a seaman in the witness-box how it was that they did not lower the topmast; upon which the witness said, with a sneer, "If you knew as much about the sea as I do, you would know that this is not a very easy matter." This incident turned the attention of my learned friend to the subject, and he invented an apparatus for lowering topmasts, for which he obtained a patent, and realized upwards of twenty thousand pounds by this, as it may be termed, accidental invention."

#### DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

##### THE LETTERS.

1. O'er the wide plain he rides with lightning speed;  
A tent his home, his truest friend a steed.
2. A minister of state, in history known,  
Who, though a Churlman, led and ruled a throne.
3. In former days a singer known to fame,  
And his, in music's art, the mightiest name.
4. A noble epic of a far-off day;  
'Neath southern skies it flings its falling spray.
5. Where silver Thames 'mid flow'ry meadows flows;  
Four centuries back, its halls of learning rose.
6. Its lowly rafters, or its high-arch'd space,  
Whitewash may deck, or gorgeous painting grace.
7. In every fireside nook they find their homely place.

##### THE WORDS.

Th' Initials will show forth the master-mind;  
The Final, what his science hath design'd.

##### KEY—THE LETTERS.

1. A. R. B.
2. R. Ichelle U.
3. C. Arestin L.
4. H. Ande L.
5. I. Lie D.
6. T. Ern L.
7. E. to N.
8. C. ellin G.
9. T. ong S.

##### THE WORDS.

Architect.  
Buildings.

#### WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jewit," "The Pretide," "Minnigrey," &c.

#### CHAPTER XXVII.

A man of fearful skill, who held  
Life and death poised in an equal  
Balance.

Old Play.

THE charlatan was busily occupied in one of his scientific experiments, when his wife made her appearance in the laboratory; he had a still placed carefully upon the little charcoal fire, which burnt dimly in the broad light of noon. A thin, bluish vapour issued from the apparatus, which he permitted to disperse up the chimney.

"Well!" he said, with an air of petulance, "what do you seek? You always interrupt me at my studies!"

"The nurse," whispered Athalie, "has betrayed us! I have obtained proof of her duplicity."

Dr. Briard pointed, with a significant glance, to the little still upon the fire.

"Could you not make the dose large enough for two?" inquired the female fiend.

The old man raised his head and regarded her fixedly.

"For two?" he said. "Humph! that depends! One I know is for the nurse—the other—"

"For the countess!" added his wife, fiercely, finishing the sentence for him. "The will you so weakly permitted to be taken from your possession has fallen into her hands—and it has armed her with a terrible weapon against us!"

"Pshaw!" exclaimed the charlatan; "how you rave! the danger does not require so violent a remedy. I can easily find the means to obtain it from her."

"She has parted with it."

"To whom?" demanded her husband, eagerly.

"Ay—there is the mystery! Doubtless to the old goldsmith, her uncle, through whose infernal agency the brat was taken from my charge. Had I but retained the boy, I could have compassed all things with her. I should have held her very heart-strings in my hand, and could have crushed them at my pleasure."

"Her uncle?" repeated Briard, musingly.

"Yes."

"Is he curious in antiquities and gems?"

"Like most of his trade, I suppose!" answered his visitor; "but why, at such a moment, pester me with trivial questions?"

"Sit down!" replied the charlatan, after glancing towards the apparatus, to ascertain that the colour of the vapour was still the same, "and let us discourse calmly."

"Calmly—when my heart is on fire!" repeated the Frenchwoman; "when my brain is seared with the recollection of her triumphant look of scorn. You might as well preach patience to the waves, as—"

"As to a woman!" interrupted her husband. "I know it. Therefore rage on—and when you have exhausted yourself, perhaps you will listen to me."

He slowly returned to the furnace, and began occupying himself with his preparations.

He had selected the best means in the world to induce the passionate and guilty woman to listen with patience to what he wished to communicate. She began to smile at her own impetuosity and passion.

"Would I could always be calm and cold as you are," she observed.

"It might be better for you."

"I cannot change my nature."

"None of us can do that!" observed the charlatan; "but we can control it, Athalie. And therein lies the only superiority I can see which man possesses over the inferior animals. You asked me just now, when I inquired if the old goldsmith was partial to antiques and gems, why I pestered you with such trivial questions at such a moment?"

"I did."

"No questions of mine are trivial!" continued the old man; "and had you been half as observant of my career as I have been of yours, you would long ere this have discovered it. I repeat my question."

"Yes!" said his visitor. "He is renowned for all that is curious or rare in his trade."

"And is rich?"

"Enormously."

"Good!" said the old man. "Now I know how to reach him—whether we wish to destroy him as a foe, or use him as an instrument! After all, Athalie," he continued, "this project of yours works but slowly! True, you have secured independence for yourself; but what have I secured? Nothing—nothing."

"I have been deceived!" replied the governess, "cruelly deceived. The settlement the earl has made upon me is all but valueless, if once this fatal will is brought to light."

"Explain that first!" said the doctor, eagerly; "explain that first. I like order in the arrangement of my ideas."

His visitor related everything which had taken place since her arrival with his lordship at the abbey.

"And you feel convinced that the will is in other hands?" said her husband, when she had finished.

"Sure of it."

"And yet you would poison her? Why, her life is of more value to you and the poor dupe, her husband, than herself."

"She has insulted me."

"No matter."

"Stung me!"

"You mistake there!" observed her husband, with a half-suppressed sneer; "only reptiles sting."

"I will be revenged!" added the woman.

"And shall I? But how? By sending her from this world, where she hath known so little joy—where her days are marked by sighs, her nights by tears! Would that be revenge? I blush for you, Athalie. No! she must live—and know that every hour of her life ministers to your advantage! That is what I call revenge!"

"But her son?"

"How old is he?"

"He must be now fifteen."

"Time has a thousand accidents," observed the charlatan, "by which he may be removed—the daily chapter of life swarms with them. Go, Athalie!" he continued; "smooth your ruffled brow. Let no curious eye see the storm which I have witnessed there. As for the nurse, I will take care no danger arises from that quarter—but you must quit the house first. When do you propose to leave?"

"To-morrow."

"Tis well!"

"And my first occupation shall be to provide a successor: she must be prudent and faithful."

"Shall I tell you how to find such a one?" demanded her husband.

"Yes."

"Choose some creature who is in your power—whose name you can blast with shame, or who holds her liberty only at your will. Fear is a much better guarantee for fidelity than gratitude! I have no faith in that."

"Nor I!" said the Frenchwoman.

"I must see you once again before you leave, to concert our final measures," observed her husband, musingly. "Let my experience be your guide. I have

been wrong," he added, mentally, "in trusting the rudder so long to a woman's hand."

As Athalie was about leave the room, she noticed that the vapour of the still had assumed a sapphire hue—she paused, and fixing her eye upon the doctor, whispered the word, "Poison?"

He nodded carelessly in assent.

"Give me some of it!" she said.

"Give you some of it?" repeated the old man, in a tone of surprise. "Why, what possible use can you have for it?"

"There is no knowing," answered the woman, carelessly, "what I may have need for: the world is full of strange chances and still more strange emergencies! Give it me."

Her husband filled a small crystal flask with the distillation; and, after sealing it hermetically, handed it to her.

"A few drops will suffice," he said.

"And what is the effect?"

"To all appearance, apoplexy," replied the man of science; "but with this difference—that after the limbs are paralysed, and the voice is mute, the brain will retain its consciousness of suffering. Had I an enemy," he added, "whom I hated, I could not wish him a more lingering, cruel death, than by its agency. It was invented by that great master in the art of poisoning—Comar Borgin."

"It was worthy of him!" exclaimed, Athalie, with a smile of satisfaction; "he was one of the master-spirits of the age, and scorned the prejudices to which the world is now a slave. Know you the antidote?"

"There is none."

This seemed still further to increase the contentment of the heartless fiend who, placing the poison in her bosom, left the library, to rejoin her noble dupe in the drawing-room.

The following morning they left the abbey: both were disappointed with the result of their visit. They felt that observant eyes were upon them, and unseen hands working their overthrow. The greater part of the journey was passed in moody silence.

Athalie had promised to send some person to supply the place of the nurse. She knew not whom to apply to—for guilt is chary of its confidence. Sometimes she thought of consulting Quirk upon the subject—but the idea was rejected as frequently as it presented itself. She knew his intriguing spirit, and feared to trust him.

The day after her arrival in town, whilst waiting for the earl in Regent Street, a female about her own age approached the door of the carriage, and, in a plaintive voice, implored her charity. At the first sound of her voice the Frenchwoman started, and dropped her veil.

"I am starving, madam," said the unfortunate creature, "and have no friends to assist me."

Something like a smile of satisfaction curled the thin lips of the governess.

"Go away, my good woman," said one of the footmen; "there is nothing for you."

The beggar turned slowly from the door of the carriage.

"Robert," said Athalie to the servant, as soon as the suppliant was beyond hearing the sound of her voice, "give the unfortunate creature this."

She placed a sovereign in his hand. The man gazed upon her with astonishment.

"For the beggar, mademoiselle?" he said.

"Did I not tell you so?" replied his mistress; "give her also the address of my lord, and tell her to call this evening; but be careful not to mention my name. You understand me?"

The fellow had too frequently been employed on private errands by the governess not to comprehend that she had a motive for her request.

"Perfectly, mademoiselle," he said, as he walked after the mendicant, to whom he gave the piece of gold.

"For me?" said the grateful creature; "for me?"

"Yes, my mistress sent it."

"Tell me her name, that I may breathe it in my prayers," exclaimed the woman, "when I return thanks to heaven that there are still hearts left to pity the unfortunate."

"She don't want any prayers," replied the man, with a smile; "however, she is a good lady where she takes—and it seems she has taken to you. She desired me to give you this card."

He placed one in her hand, with the address of the Earl of Moretown.

The female received it mechanically: she could scarcely credit her good fortune.

"And I," she said, as the kind lady dropped her veil and turned aside, "accused her of having no heart."

"She wishes to see you."

"When?"

"To-night," said the footman.

"What hour?"

"Let me see: I and my lord will have to be at the House about eight. Call at nine and, you will be admitted."

The woman promised, and the lacquey returned to the spot where he had left the carriage.

That same evening, as the governess was dressing for dinner, she gave orders to her waiting-woman that if a beggar should call, with the card of his lordship, she was to be shown to her dressing-room.

"A beggar, mademoiselle?" repeated the astonished Abigail.

"Yes."

"And shown here?"

"Why not," said her mistress, sharply, "if such is my will? Is there anything so extraordinary in my feeling an interest in an unfortunate creature who has asked for my assistance?"

"Certainly not," answered the girl, hastily, for she dreaded the imperious temper of the Frenchwoman; "only, as I had never received a similar order, I wished to be perfectly sure that I understood it rightly."

Athalie shrugged her shoulders, and muttered the word "bétes!" as she left the room—for the second dinner-bell had rung, and the earl had a nervous horror of waiting—punctuality being about the only virtue he possessed.

(To be continued.)

## SCIENCE.

THE art of discovering murder by poison will henceforth be claimed by Mayence. One Hellwig, by his application of the microscope to toxicology, discerns the smallest particles of poison in the blood.

THE Normandy apparatus for rendering salt water fresh, and at the same time aerating it, was a subject of much interest to the guests on board the Sacramento. The apparatus (which was in operation,) has the capacity of producing 2,000 gallons of pure fresh water per day, impregnated with atmospheric air, thus rendering it as sparkling and palatable as if coming fresh from a mountain spring. In the saving of space, formerly so much occupied on ship-board by water-tanks and barrels, which can now be devoted to freight, we should suppose the apparatus of Dr. Normandy to be almost indispensable.

HOW GRANITE WAS FORMED.—In delivering one of the lectures of the Sweeney course at the Royal School of Mines, Dr. Percy objected to the assertion of geologists, that granitic rocks must have been formed by plutonic agencies, for, said he, there are certain difficulties which have always been in the way of accepting this view of the subject—difficulties known at all events to those who have been accustomed to make experiments on the fusion of mineral substances at high temperatures. This is especially seen by examining the condition of quartz in granite; it is always found in the crystalline condition, and has invariably a specific gravity of 2.6. There is not a single instance known to the contrary. Hence there is reason to believe that the quartz could never have been fused, for the moment silica is fused, no matter in what condition it was previously, a peculiar glass-like colloidal mass is produced, having a specific gravity which never exceeds 2.3. There is, therefore, good reason to conclude that granite could never have been formed under the condition of a high temperature.

### ANCIENT HYDRAULIC MACHINE.

M. DELIGNY, now engaged in working the copper mines of San Domingos, in the province of Alentejo, Portugal, has just sent a bucket-wheel, dating from the Roman period, to the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, and a paper on the subject to the Academy of Sciences.

The above-mentioned mines, where this wheel was found, were worked, according to *Galliani*, in the earliest ages by the first nations that peopled the Iberian Peninsula. The chief mines in Portugal were Setúbal and Troja; in Spain, the mountains of Tharsis and Zalamea, or Solomon, whither Solomon and Hiram sent their fleets to procure the copper required for the decoration of the Temple.

The great importance of these mines is shown by the masses of scoriae still visible around, and which are estimated at 20,000,000 tons, accumulated in the course of several ages; the copper extracted is thence calculated at 800,000 tons. These scoriae also reveal two different systems of treatment of the ore, pertaining, one to the Phœnician, the other to the Roman period.

The ore was extracted through shafts, at distances of from twenty-six to forty metres. When these shafts were very deep, an additional shaft for ventilation was sunk close to the main ones; they sometimes were eighty metres in depth. But as the hardness of the rock sometimes prevented the miners from continuing their galleries below the levels of the waters, these would accumulate in certain places, and then a bucket-engine was used to pump them out. The one sent to the Conservatoire, and discovered at San Domingos, is 6.66 metres in diameter. The spokes are supposed to be of fir, the axle and its supports of

oak. The buckets, twenty-five in number, are sixteen centimetres in width, by fifty in length, and thirteen in height. All the pieces of the wheel are joined without any metallic fitting. The wheel was set in motion by men in the manner a tread-mill is worked. The quantity of water thrown out per second was 1.84 hectolitres. This wheel dates from the year 413 of our era, and has therefore existed 1,452 years. It is certainly the oldest relic of its kind.

At the last sitting of the Academy of Sciences, M. Payen communicated some researches of his, for the purpose of ascertaining the chemical composition of the wood of this wheel.

Mr. Payen remarked that the wonderful state of preservation of this relic of the Roman period has induced General Morin to attribute it to the antiseptic properties of the salts of iron and copper which must have existed in the mine. To verify this supposition, M. Payen operated upon a very few thin shavings and scrapings taken from the wheel. The shavings were brownish; on being subject to desiccation, in a stove at a temperature of 100 deg. Centigrade, they lost about fifteen hundredths of their weight, a loss which represented the watery elements they contained.

By incineration a residue of a brick-red colour was obtained, which yielded 2.6 parts of sesquioxide of iron, and four-fifths of a part of oxide of copper. The superficial scrapings, consisting of a sort of mineral incrustation, mixed with a few minute particles of wood, were dried and calcined in the open air, in order to ensure the destruction of all organic matter; the brownish-red residue thus obtained was found to contain 10.4 parts of sesquioxide of iron, and one-third of a part of oxide of copper.

These results subjected to calculation, show that the wheel of San Domingos contained very nearly six kilogrammes per cubic metre of sulphate of copper, that is, very nearly the quantity now used to preserve railway sleepers from putrefaction, for fifteen years; to which must be added 12 kilogs. of sesquioxide of iron, which must have contributed towards the preservation of the wheel for upwards of fourteen centuries.

### DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT CELTIC REMAINS IN IRELAND.

AN interesting discovery of an ancient Celtic necropolis has been made by Mr. E. A. Conwell, of Trim. The remains are very extensive, and are situated on the peaks of Hag's mountain, as the hill of "Slieve na Callaigh," near Oldcastle, in the county of Meath, is called.

Mr. Conwell read a paper on the subject before the Irish Royal Academy, of which he is a member. Some of the numerous cairns, he said, are yet unopened and uninjured. The stones, however, had been partially removed from most of the smaller ones, for fences, thus leaving exposed some of the interior chambers, the flag-stones forming which had been found engraved with very curious devices, rubbings of which Mr. Conwell submitted to the inspection of the academy, together with enlarged sketches of various descriptions of chambers, and a general field-plan of the present appearance of the place, and the relative positions of the cairns. The three largest, measuring each from 120 to 180 yards in circumference, and from 20 to 30 yards in height, had yet to be explored. He urged the thorough and systematic examination of the place under the auspices of the academy.

Various other tumuli and some very curious subterranean caves, in the immediate neighbourhood of Slieve Callaigh, were also described. Mr. Conwell quoted extracts from the "Book of Ballymote," "Annals of the Four Masters," Keating, Dr. O'Donovan, and Professor O'Curry, to show that this ancient Celtic burying-place, "on the confines of the Kingdoms of Meath and Ulster," exactly corresponds with all the descriptions possessed of the greatest of all the ancient royal cemeteries of Ireland,—Brugh, the precise situation of which, he said, had not hitherto been satisfactorily established, but which had been erroneously supposed to be near Stackallen. Objections, however, were made to Mr. Conwell's idea, in the discussion which followed.

### A LITTLE INSIGHT AS TO THE MAGNETIC FORCE.

At the Royal Institution, the other evening, Professor Tyndall gave "A Magnetic Experiment," in course of which he demonstrated that a magnetized bar of iron becomes elongated, not shortened, at the moment of magnetization. He also showed that when rapidly intermitting currents of electricity were sent through the wire, a humming sound was distinctly heard in the iron bar, occasioned, as he conceived, by the momentary changes among the particles of iron as the magnetic power was imparted and lost. The lengthening of the bar was shown to the sight by help of a lever acting on a small mirror and a ray of light, so as to show very minute changes in the length of the iron bar. Dr. Tyndall accounted for the



lengthening by the hypothesis that the particles of iron tend to arrange themselves in the direction of the current, which passes lengthwise through the iron bar. This reminds one, we may here observe, of the expansion of water while freezing under the influence of the usually contractile force of cold, and is not, therefore, inconsistent with the attractive nature of the magnetic force. In further illustration of the experiment, that of the arrangement of loose particles of oxide of iron suspended in water was exhibited, showing that, when magnetized, the opacity arising from confusion was replaced by translucency from the magnetic arrangement of the particles in lines. May not this shed a light on translucency and transparency in general, as of crystals and glass?

#### THE ALABAMA AND THE KEARSAGE.

The following particulars of the construction of the Alabama and the Kearsage are derived from authentic sources, and possess a good deal of interest:

The "No. 290," or Alabama, was launched from the building-yard of Messrs. Laird, of Birkenhead. She was a barque-rigged wooden propeller, of 1,040 tons register. Length of keel, 210 ft.; length over all, 220 ft.; beam, 32 ft.; depth, 17 ft. Her engines, built by the same firm, were two horizontal ones, each of 300-horse power, with stowage for 350 tons of coal. Her sails, carried at all times, were as follows: Fore, foretopmast, staysail, jib; two large trysails; the usual square sails on fore and main, with the exception of the mainsail, which was a flying one; spanker and gaff-topails; all standing rigging, wire. Double wheel, with motto engraved thereon, *Aide toi, et Dieu t'aidera*, placed just before the mizenmast. Bridge in the centre, just before the funnel. She carried five boats, viz., cutter and launch amidships, gig and whaleboat between the main and mizen masts, and dingy astern. The main deck was pierced for twelve guns, elliptic stern, billet head, high bulwarks; cabin accommodation first-class; ward-room furnished with a handsome suite of state-rooms; stowage—starboard for midshipmen, port for engineers; next came engine-room, coal-bunkers, &c.; then the berth deck, capable of accommodating 120 men; under the ward-room were store-rooms; and under the stowage were shell-rooms; just forward of the fire-arms came the hold; next the magazines, and forward of all the boatswain's and sailmakers' store-rooms; the hold, &c., being all under the berth deck.

The Kearsage, named after a range of mountains in New England, is a recent acquisition to the navy of the United States; in fact, she is one of the nine gunboats completed within three months from the date of the order given. She is the sister ship of the Tuscarora, whose presence in the Solent, during the visit of the Confederate cruiser Nashville (since destroyed) occasioned considerable excitement some time since. The Kearsage is a sloop of 1,031 tons, carrying eight guns. Her broadside guns are 32-pw. six in number, but she is also furnished with two 11-in. smooth-bore Dahlgren's, and it is to these tremendous weapons the sinking of the Alabama is probably due.

It is stated that the Kearsage was armoured with ranges of heavy chain cable inside of a wooden sheathing, but the statement must be taken just for what it is worth, and on that value we are not prepared to pronounce an opinion.

**COTTON FROM JAPAN.**—The Japanese must be surprised at their own capabilities as producers. Three times more cotton has been grown during the last season than there ever was before. The price of this staple, too, has been tripled since it has found a market in Europe, and the wharf is piled with bales of it for weeks together. Extensive preparations are being made by farmers for increasing their crop for the coming season, and no doubt five-fold will be grown for exportation the coming season. In the space of five years the three great staples of the country—tea, silk, and cotton, have increased three-fold, and their prices have risen in an equal ratio.

**CIRCUS RIDING.**—"How is it, papa?" I once heard a little boy say, "that the horse doesn't fall into the ring altogether?" and how is it that the man doesn't fall to the ground when he is leaping on the horse's back? Now, as some of my juvenile readers may be in want of similar information, I will tell them all about it. Know, then, my intelligent young friends, that there are two well-known mechanical forces—the centrifugal and the centripetal—the first being the tendency to fly from the centre, and the last the tendency to seek it. These two forces, acting upon each other, sustain bodies, such as the planets, in their revolutions round the centre. When a horse gallops round the ring of a circus, it is compelled to incline inward, and the faster it goes the greater must be the inclination; but, however much or little, according to the varying speed, the inclination may be, it is one which the horse could not maintain for a moment if at rest. Were the horse to be suddenly brought to a standstill

in its circular course, it would at the same instant fall inwards on the sawdust. Were it to maintain an upright position, and attempt to circle round the ring, its impetus would force it outside the barrier; but the antagonism of the centrifugal and centripetal forces upholds it, although running round included many degrees beyond its own centre of gravity. As to the other portions of the question, it may be replied that the motion of the horse being communicated to the rider, he is sure to alight on the animal again; no matter how high he may leap. It is the same with the balls of the juggler: the motion which is communicated to them carries them forward, so that they are sure to alight in the cup, no matter how many paces the horse may have advanced.—*Glimpses of Real Life.*

An Alpine Club has recently been established in Turin, having for its chief object the scientific exploration of those vast fields of ice, perpetual snow, and abysses of nameless lakes which are comprised in the Italian Alps—a region by no means inferior in scientific interest, as well as natural beauty to those of Savoy, Switzerland, or the Tyrol.

#### HOW THE FEDERAL SOLDIERS RETURN HOME.

On Sunday afternoon, writes a correspondent from Baltimore, while the bells were ringing for afternoon service, the sound of the drum and fife, followed by the air of the "Star Spangled Banner," played by a full military band, was heard in the street.

Opening the window and looking out upon Monument-square, I find the place full of soldiers. Thinking it was a reinforcement for General Grant, I descended into the square and mixed with the crowd of spectators. I soon learnt that these hardy, sun-browned, and dirty-looking veterans were the Pennsylvania reserves, who were not rushing to the battlefield to crush the rebellion, but rushing from it, because their time had expired.

Their numbers were said to be upwards of 4,000, though it afterwards appeared that they were less than 2,000; that they formed the sole remnants of 12 regiments, originally of the full complement of 1,250 men each, or 14,400 in all; that they had enlisted for three years in that first flush of the excitement that followed the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter; that they had fought in all the battles of McDowell, McClellan, Pope, Burnside, and Hooker; that they had crossed the Rapidan with General Grant, fought under his orders at the Wilderness and Spottsylvania Court-house, marched with him in his long and dangerous circuit from Spottsylvania to the Chickahominy, and that their time having expired some days previously, they had left his army on the 1st of June and marched two days from the front to the White-house, whence they were conveyed in steam transports to Washington, and thence again by rail to this city, on their way home.

Their battered banners, as well as their tattered clothes, bore witness to the work they had performed, and the hard service they had undergone, and as they marched through the crowded streets it was impossible not to admit that 20,000 new recruits, even if not composed of Irish and German mercenaries, could not make amends to General Grant for the loss of 2,000 such fine fellows as these, seasoned to war, inured to hardships, and who had, moreover, the additional merit of having enlisted for pure love of the cause, at a time when bounty money was not considered a provocative of heroism.

No cheers greeted them as they passed, footsore and weary, along the dusty way; and not even the members of the Lincoln delegation who crowded the balconies and door-steps of Barnum's Hotel to witness the spectacle so much as clapped a hand or waved a handkerchief to welcome the returning braves.

#### THE PARTING OF ENGLAND AND CORFU.

On the 2nd of June Corfu put on its holiday dress to bid farewell to its English protectors.

There was not a cloud in the bright blue sky, there was not a ripple on the water—yet more bright and more blue. A small fleet of troopships and transports clustered around the majestic Marlborough; near them lay a clumsy-looking paddlewheel steamer, with 800 Greek troops, forming the future garrison of Corfu, on board. The harbour was dotted with yachts and pleasure boats; the shores were lined with a dense mass of people of all classes.

At 11 o'clock the last remaining regiment in the citadel, the 4th King's Own, marched out, and their guard at the main gate was relieved by a Greek guard of gendarmerie. They are not ill-looking men, and are fairly dressed and set up. The troops sent to garrison these islands are, however, said to be picked men, and superior in equipment and in discipline to the rest of the army.

Meanwhile the approaches to the Palace of St. Michael and St. George were choked by crowds of

townspeople and villagers from many a mile around, and there was hardly standing room in the reception-hall, so eager were the people to pay their parting respects to the last of the Lords High Commissioners.

When Sir Henry Storks, in a few graceful words in Italian, and in a voice which betrayed his emotion, bade them farewell, at least three-fourths of his audience were in tears, and many blubbered outright (for the Ionian is much given to the melting mood), as they crowded round his excellency, shaking him by the hand, embracing him, and conferring upon him not unfrequently those salutations which Englishmen generally reserve for the other sex.

Nothing could exceed the good-temper with which he bore these inflictions, and even when, freed at length, as he fondly hoped, from these overwhelming demonstrations of affection, as he was descending the steps of the palace, an elderly, fat gentleman approached him from behind, and, flinging his arms about his neck, gave him half-a-dozen smacking kisses, there was not a shade of impatience mingled with the expression of surprise at this unexpected honour.

As he passed to the place of embarkation, every man in that dense crowd respectfully uncovered, and a running fire of "Zito's" marked his progress, interspersed now and then with a cordial "Good-bye and God bless you, sir!" in an English voice; and when he entered his barge and was rowed away under the last English salute from the batteries, there arose a parting cheer more loud and hearty than I should have believed Ionian lungs capable of uttering.

#### HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

**VOLATILE SOAP FOR REMOVING PAINT, GREASE SPOTS, ETC.**—Four table-spoonfuls of spirits of hartshorn, four table-spoonfuls of alcohol, and a table-spoonful of salt. Shake the whole well together in a bottle, and apply with a sponge or brush.

**FEATHER HAND SCREEN.**—The feathers are arranged in the following manner:—Round the outer edge, and projecting beyond the screen itself, Gallina feathers, beneath that, pheasant's (the dark golden ones with black edge), then a row of pure white, rather a larger feather (it may be a white fowl's); next, soft buff feathers; next, a row of Gallina's, then two rows of pheasants' (brown, with white eyes); then a row of jays'; and lastly, quite in the centre, near the bottom, a bright scarlet feather or two of a foreign bird. The three first rows go all round the screen, the rest merely from side to side.

#### STATISTICS.

**THE number of licensed brewers in Great Britain is 35,236. The total amount contributed by them to Government by way of duty is £334,829.**

**THE NAVIES OF THE WORLD.**—The navy of Great Britain carries 14,050 guns, of France 8,876, United States, 4,184, Russia, 2,013, Holland 1,220, Denmark 958, Sweden 920, Spain 904, Austria 852, Italy 789, Portugal 362, Norway 340, Turkey 297, Brazil 276, Prussia 265, Greece 149, Peru 104, Chili 66, and Belgium 28. The navies of the world consist of 1,684 steamers, and 1,296 sailing ships, carrying 86,653 guns.

**FUEL STATISTICS.**—A Parliamentary return recently issued shows that, during the year 1863, 8,005,399 tons of coal, 256,731 tons of clinders, 13,083 tons of culm, and 67,288 tons of patent fuel were exported from the United Kingdom to foreign ports and British settlements abroad. The declared value of these exports was £3,752,808. 5,127,106 tons of coal and 24,775 tons of patent fuel came into London during 1863, as compared with 4,973,825 tons of coal and 30,257 tons of patent fuel during the year 1862.

**A CORRESPONDENT of the Builder says:**—"We have now in London and different parts of the United Kingdom about 14 peals of 12 bells, 50 peals of 70 bells, 690 peals of eight bells, 700 peals of six bells, and about 400 peals of five bells, and a great number from one bell to a chime of four bells; and all these peals of five to peals of 12 bells cost each from £300 to upwards of £2,500. So you see what a merry ringing island England is; and a melodious peal of bells is, perhaps, not less captivating than the fluted instrument ever yet invented.

**BENEFICIAL INFLUENCE OF TEA.**—The beneficial results of the introduction of tea and coffee have been strangely overlooked or underrated. It has been, however, well described as leading "to the most wonderful change that has ever taken place in the diet of modern civilized nations—a change highly important both in a moral and physical point of view." These

beverages have the admirable advantage of affording stimulus without producing intoxication, or any of its evil consequences. Lovers of tea and coffee are, in fact, rarely drinkers; and hence the use of these beverages has benefited both manners and morals. Raynal observes that the use of tea has contributed more to the sobriety of the Chinese than the severest laws, the most eloquent discourses, or the best treatises on morality."

### FACETIE.

WHAT coin of our realm does the King of Prussia in his treatment of Denmark represent? Why, a (sov.-erring) sovereign, to be sure!

IN what does Denmark resemble the champion boxer of England? Why, in having possession of "the belt." (The great and little belt belong to her, as may be seen in the chart of the Cattedg.)

MRS. GRANT is reported to have full confidence in the success of General Grant, because "he is a very obstinate man."

SOME one looking on recently at a peculiar style of playing whist, said, "That is quite a new proceeding." "Not at all," observed his neighbour; "it descends from the 'Greeks.'"

AMONG other amusements now delighting Paris is a "delightful" monkey, who rides like a man. From the Empress downwards, everybody has paid a tribute to the talent of this animal, "who mounts a horse like an English milord."

IF a lady in a red cloak were to cross a field in which was a goat, what wonderful transformation would probably take place? The goat would turn to butter, and the lady into a scarlet-runner.

ALLUDING to the recent grant of £20,000 to Sir Rowland Hill, the *Paris Temps* says:—"One of the bright sides of English manners is the intelligent generosity with which honours and pecuniary rewards are lavished upon the eminent men who have deserved well of their country."

HANDEL, the great composer, was also a great glutton. He would order dinner for three; he would then ring for the waiter, and would ask him, "Is do dinner ready?" "Yes, sir, as soon as the company comes." "Den bring me tinner," he would say, "I am to company."

### WELL DONE.

The friends of Jones were considerably surprised, the other day, to notice that he had been having his hair cut. Of course they hastened to offer him their congratulations. Among the rest was Pat L., who observed—

"That is a splendid cut that you have got on that hair."

"Do you think so?" asked the pleased recipient of the compliment.

"Of course I do," said Pat. "No one would undertake to dispute it, for it speaks for itself."

"Glad that you admire it," said Jones, removing his cap; but how does it speak for itself?"

"Why," replied Pat, "because every ogle of the shearn is plainly visible, and has a story of its own to tell."

"BRUDDER BONES, can you tell me de difference 'tween dying and dieting?" "Why, ob course I can, Samuel. When you diet, you lib on noffin, and when you die you hab noffin to live on." "Well, dat's different from what I tort it was. I tort it was a race atween de doctor's stuff and starvation, to see which will kill first."

ENGLISH pufflers think they have exhausted the art of puffing, but will they dare to think of rivaling the following advertisement concerning a pill, which appeared recently, dated St. Julien de Sault, May 5, and proceeding:—"Sir,—After twelve years of happy union with my Charlotte, she was seized with a dreadful indigestion. A month continued, and it was obstinate. I had an explanation of a warm character with her father-in-law, whom I accused of deceiving me. The malady of Charlotte increased, and I resolved to call a family council, when one night I had a dream, and a beautiful angel appeared, who counselled me to use your pills. Thanks to the pills, Charlotte was better in two days, and I received her into the arms of her husband again.—(Signed) CREPER."

A CORRESPONDENT goes over an old ground which he fancies new, and alludes to the winning way of the Premier. He, however, tells a little bit of an anecdote, which is worth repeating, in proof of his remarks:—"The deputation of noblemen and Irish members which waited on the Prime Minister at Cambridge House, to impress upon him the importance of establishing a naval dockyard at Cork, were kept waiting a short time; but at last Lord Palmerston, stepping in, in his easy style, with his coat buttoned up, accosted the

members, "Well, Maguire, how is your eye?" said the Prime Minister. "Have you been to your oculist?" "No, my lord," replied the member for Dungarvan; "I have left Nature to do her own work." "Nature is a very good worker," replied Lord Palmerston, "but you can't trust her at all times." It seems that when the member for Dungarvan waited upon Lord Palmerston to ask him to name a day upon which to receive the deputation, Mr. Maguire was labouring under some irritation in one of his eyes, and the pain he was suffering did not escape the Prime Minister. "Now, my dear fellow, I can't listen to you until your eye is well. This is the name of my oculist. Go and have your eye examined, and when it is well come and see me. We can then have the deputation." This is the way that Lord Palmerston twines himself round the hearts of all with whom he comes in contact, and contrives to attach to him men of all parties and of different opinions.

TURN HIM OUT.—General Mackenzie, when Commander-in-Chief of the Chatham Division of Marines, was very rigid in his duty, and, among other regulations, would suffer no officer to be saluted on guard if out of his uniform. One day the general observed a lieutenant of Marines in a plain dress, and, though he knew the young officer intimately, he called to the sentinel to turn him out. The officer appealed to the general, saying who he was. "I know you not," said the general; "turn him out." A short time after, the general had been at a small distance from Chatham to pay a visit, and, returning in the evening in a blue coat, claimed entrance at the yard gate. The sentinel demanded the countersign, which the general not knowing, desired the officer of the guard to be sent for, who proved to be the lieutenant whom the general had treated so cavalierly. "Who are you?" asked the lieutenant. "I am General Mackenzie," was the reply. "What! without a uniform?" rejoined the lieutenant. "Turn him out! turn him out! The general would break his bones if he knew he assumed his name." The general made his retreat, but the next day, inviting the young lieutenant to breakfast, the general told him that he had done his duty with very commendable exactness.

### DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

A gentleman returning from Wallhamston one evening hailed the conductor of an omnibus, and asked him if he was going to the Bank. He answered in the affirmative, and that the fare would be a shilling. On arriving at the "Flower Pot," in Bishopsgate-street, the conductor opened the door, and said, "Ve goes no farder, sir." "Oh, very well," said the passenger, giving him sixpence; "I call that a shilling." The fellow was so taken aback that he could not say a word, only calling out to the driver, "I say, Bill, if that ere chap bean't a rum 'un, I'll be blowed!"

A reverend gentleman in Philadelphia—across the Atlantic, reverend gentlemen, like generals and colonels, blossom in great plenty—has published a book of 400 pages, in which he proves the Emperor of the French to be "the destined Monarch of the World," which is flattering; but then he adds, "Personal Antichrist," which is certainly not flattering. One of his arguments is that Napoleon and Apollyon are substantially the same words, and from this self-evident proposition all the rest of his theory follows with equal plainness.

### THE HEIGHT OF IMPUDENCE.

For a week or two the walls, and, shame to say, the shop windows of Hawick have displayed a flaunting bill headed "No Acting—Real Life," in which it was intimated that "High-i-obby, the renowned Jeremy Diddler, would deliver a lecture in the Subscription Rooms on Tuesday,"—the subject to be "How I did the Dunse dunces." This was divided into numerous heads, such as "The invitations," "The young ladies," "The carriage and four," and "The jewellers," and concluded with "The trial and fun in court."

For the benefit of the uninitiated, we may state that this "High-i-obby" was originally a stable boy in Hawick. A few years ago he went to Dunse, and was wicked and clever enough to get it noised abroad that he had come into possession of an estate worth between £20,000 and £30,000. Overlooking his vulgarity and impudence, a number of respectable families in and around the town asked him to their houses, and society quickly opened wide to receive him.

He took advantage of this in a most artful and daring manner. He drove a handsome "turn out" was courted by solicitors and bankers, patronised grateful merchants, and made extraordinary inroads on jewellers' stocks in search of presents for the young lady whom he had chosen out of a numerous circle of suitors for a wife.

When the mask would no longer cover his real character, he literally "boiled," and did not find himself at ease until he had walked over sixty miles of the dreary moorland lying between the scene of his exploits and the English Border. Returning after a

time to Yetholme, he was captured, carried to Greenlaw, tried, and condemned.

It was the same man who "lectured" at Hawick before a numerous audience. He was dressed like a mountebank, and harangued his intelligent audience from the orchestra, "cracking" a whip while he told them all about his ovation at Dunse. He went over the whole affair in a perfectly free and even triumphant manner, chuckled delightedly over the gullibility of his victims, and showed himself to be upon the whole a very charming and enviable young man.

A TOUGH YARN.—I remember hearing a good story of an old fellow who once resided in our town, and who was very fond of telling stories—rather large ones, too, his friends thought. He had been in the army during the Mexican war, and most of his stories were of events which transpired there. One evening, quite a number were gathered in the village store, and Uncle Joe was there as usual, ready to tell his accustomed yarns. The conversation turned upon the size of certain vegetables, and one of the farmers present told the dimensions of some cabbages he had raised. "That's nothing," said Uncle Joe. "Why, when I was in Mexico, I saw two whole acres of cabbages so big, that many's the time a whole regiment of us went right under the leaves of one of 'em to get out of the rain. Perdigone fine country that Mexico is, I can tell ye." "That's so," remarked one of the company, "for I was there about the same time, and I saw one of the most remarkable sights there that I ever saw in my life." "What was it? Do tell us," said Uncle Joe. "Why, one day I was travelling along, and I came to what at first I thought was an immense brass wall, extending each way as far as I could see, but on close inspection I found it was a brass kettle, so large that there were twenty-five tinkers at work upon it, and they were so far apart that they could not hear the sound of each other's hammers." "What in thunder, were they making that for?" Uncle Joe asked, in open-mouthed wonder. "Why, to boil your big head of cabbage in, to be sure." It is needless to say that Uncle Joe told no more stories in that store for at least a week.

LEAM.—The great Leek BATHMAN has left us: he us console ourselves with a Greenwich dinner, and the little White Bate, man.—Punch.

AT THE OPERA.—"Oh, that dear duck, Mario, how like a nightingale he sings!" exclaimed a gushing girl the other night to Lord Dundreary. "W-well, no, I c-can't see that p-p-precisely," said his lordship, "if any fella's like a n-n-nightingale, it must be Jug-jug-lini!"—Punch.

### CONSIDERATE.

Fare (who has driven rather a hard bargain and is settling).—"But why, my good man, do you put that cloth over the horse's head?"

Cab-Driver.—"Shure, yer honour, then—I shouldn't like him to see how little ye pay for such a hard day's work!"—Punch.

SPORTING INTELLIGENCE.—The Prince of Wales remarked, on the recent "Cup" day, that it was quite right that a Scottish Chief should win the Chief Ascot-fish prize! His royal highness also remarked, on seeing a thick volume of smoke issue from the top of the Grand Stand, that he supposed Mr. Merry was cooking some of the st-e-aks he had won.—Fun.

### "RING-A-DING A-DING." (Fide Old Song.)

WE have just fallen in with a strange instance of ring-ing the changes, in an advertisement extracted from the columns of a contemporary:

"£5 Reward.—Lost on the 9th instant, three rings. Plain gold twisted ring; pink choral ring; gold, with turquoise set in, two stones lost out of it. Whoever will bring &c."

We are at a loss to understand what a "pink choral ring" must be like. Is it a ring-net ring, to be red at sight, or is it a round adapted for several voices? We confess we are quite as much at a loss as the ring-a-Fin.

WHY NOT?—The Yankee ladies have been holding a sensation meeting, at which they agreed to patronize no articles of foreign manufacture. Will the other sex follow their example, and begin a new system of consumption of home produce, by declining to import silly Irishmen as food for powder? We don't think it is very likely, for the Yankee loves his country far too well to run any risk of dying for it himself.—Fun.

SHOULDER ARMS.—We observe that the Prussian army is to be shorn of its epaulettes. The reason alleged is that active service has proved, as it has done in other armies, that they are a great nuisance to the wearers. This is all very well, but how are the officers to be distinguished? We would suggest that stripes should be adapted, and in consideration of the gallantry of the troops in Schleswig-Holstein, they



should be on the back, where they might be best impressed with the cat-as-trophies of the war.—*Fun.*

WHAT is the difference between the individuals who receive the honorary degree at the universities and the undergraduates who greet them with derisive remarks?—The former are doctors of civil laws, and the latter scholars of uncivil law-haws.—*Comic News.*

We heard a Scotchman completely snuffed out the other day while trying to cram down a friend's throat that Blair Athol was a Scotch horse. "Why," said our friend, "Wales has a better right to claim him." "How's that?" said Sawney. "Didn't he owe everything in the race to the Mount of Snowdon?" The Scot disappeared in a mist.—*Comic News.*

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.—There was once a great legist of the name of Mansfield. We have a Mansfield in our day, but he is not a great legist, although he is one of the metropolitan police magistrates. He is not only not a great legist, but he has shown himself to be a man of hard heart. A poor family, bearing the appropriate name of Lamb, were recently brought before him, charged with the atrocious crime of being homeless, destitute and starving, and this bright ornament of the magisterial bench said he looked upon them simply as beggars, and, if he caught them again in his district, he would send them all to prison. Of course the poor lambs felt the enormity of their offence, and were only too glad to get out into the fields again, where their blessings will not reach the ears of the illustrious Mansfield.—*Comic News.*

The gold medal presented to General Washington by Congress on the evacuation of Boston by the British, and the only gold one ever presented to him, has been purchased by a few gentlemen of Delaware, and will be presented to Lieut.-General Grant. The sum paid for the medal is over 4,000 dollars.

On Saturday, the anniversary day of the battle of Waterloo, after a lapse of 49 years, 187 gallant officers above the rank of lieutenant survived. The rank of these officers may be summarised as follows:—Generals, 21; lieutenant-generals, 19; major-generals, 28; colonels, 26; lieutenant-colonels, 25; majors, 15; and captains, 4.

THE WORKING CLASSES AND THE METROPOLITAN RAILWAY.—Since the underground line was opened on the 10th of January of last year, it has conveyed about fourteen millions of persons. Of these, more than 60 per cent. have been of the third or lowest class of passengers. The company have recently run special trains for workmen, so as to enable them to get to their work before six o'clock in the morning, the fare for the double journey being 3d. By means of these trains the labourer may live out in the open districts about Paddington, and go daily to and from his work in the City for 1s. 6d. weekly; and it is said that when the company's extension is open to Finsbury, they propose to increase the number, and to reduce the payment to 1s. weekly. Very shortly the line will be placed in direct communication with the Crystal Palace, and cheap trains will be run for the benefit of the working classes. The opening of the Hammersmith line in connection with the Metropolitan, which took place on 18th of June, will enable the public to avail themselves, at low fares, of the opportunity of being landed in half-an-hour in the pleasant open country in that neighbourhood.

ABOUT 1,500 magnificent oaks have recently fallen beneath the axe of the woodman in Todwick Wood, about a mile from South Auston. Some fifty men have been employed for some weeks stripping the park. A great number of oaks are also stripped ready for the axe in that beautiful rocky ravine, Auston Stones, and some have already fallen. Many of them are for Government use for shipbuilding purposes. The estate belongs to the Duke of Leeds.

A GREEK CHRISTENING.—"The proceedings were opened by a long exhortation by the priest to the devil, who appears to be considered as especially present and active on such occasions. Amongst other performances the dirty little boy, who officiated as clerk squeaked out the Creed three times successively with the most wonderful rapidity. The last twenty minutes of the ceremony were actively employed in securing the baby. After various crossings and benedictions, it was stripped naked, and carried in a cloth by the nurse. The priests then burnt a quantity of incense, and poured plenty of oil into a large iron cauldron, previously half filled with tepid water. His reverence now seized the baby, and plunged it three times into the cauldron. The shrieks and piteous moans of the victim may be easily imagined. It was then laid, still naked, on its back; and the priest, with a piece of rag soaked in oil, crossed its face and breast, and after this it was turned on its back, and the same ceremonies performed on its back. It was now put into a cloth, which was held by the priest at

one end, and by the godfather at the other. In this hammock-like position the baby was carried three times round the cauldron and incense pan.—*Four Years in the Ionian Islands. By Viscount Kirkwall.*

BELLS.—The invention of bells is attributed to Paulinus, Bishop of Fola, in Campania, about the year 400. They were first introduced into churches as a defence against thunder and lightning. They were first hung up in England at Coryland Abbey, Lincolnshire, in 945. In the eleventh century, and later, it was the custom to baptize them in churches before they were used.

A LITTLE GETTING UP-STAIRS FOR TOURISTS.—A letter from Switzerland states that a project has been formed there for making a path to facilitate the ascent of tourists to the highest points of the two gigantic pyramids, which tower to the height of nearly 6,000 feet above the town of Schywis.

SUFFERINGS OF THE POLES.—The following appears in the *Ojcysz* of Warsaw, under date of June 4:—"Yesterday a fresh relay of 200 exiles was sent forward to the extremity of Russia—the sixty-third of the same kind which has left Warsaw in the space of a year and a half. Most of these relays amounted to between 400 and 500 persons; but, if we take only an average of 300, this will give a total of 20,000 persons deported within this short period. Amongst the exiles of the 4th of June was Mdlle. Guzowska (we do not know what has become of her two sisters; report says that one of them died in hospital from the effects of a whipping which she received), and the ladies Myskowska, Plichta, Dombrowska, and Swientochowska. It is computed that 120,000 persons have been deported from Lithuania, and that number does not appear to be the least exaggerated." The *Ojcysz* also says:—"The Russians have razed the village of Przeczka. The inhabitants had been made a spy. Men, women, and children have been sent half-naked to Siberia. A decree of the National Government prohibits the purchase of national landed property sold by the Russians, declaring the sale to be null and void, even at third hand."

#### HOW FICKLE EVERY EARTHLY THING.

How fickle every earthly thing;  
There's not a joy without its sting,  
Or rose without its thorn.  
There's not a day without its night,  
However glorious or bright,  
It shone upon its morn.

There's not a smile, a simple smile  
That comes to cheer or to beguile,  
But also has its tear.  
E'en rays of hope that fill the breast  
Are followed by a dim unrest,  
And feeling sad of fear.

I would not trust a single man,  
Though he of men should lead the van,  
And be accounted true;  
For friendship's fickle hearts are vain,  
And confidence I'll e'er disdain,  
And trust not e'en a few.

On God and self alone rely,  
And every earthly power defy  
This simple trust to shake,  
Confident that when life is o'er,  
And I have left this earthly shore,  
In heaven I shall awake.

A. T.

#### GEMS.

MOST of what is good may be traced to woman and home. Without them man would be a savage.

EVERY fool knows how often he has been a rogue, but every rogue does not know how often he has been a fool.

TALENT is a docile creature; it basks into the shafts like a lamb; but genius is impatient—its wild blood makes it hard to train.

THE wisest man may be wiser to-day, than he was yesterday, and to-morrow than he is to-day. Total freedom from change would imply total freedom from error.

HE that would pass the latter part of his life with honour and decency, must, when he is young, consider that "he one day shall be old, and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young."

MAN'S lives should be like the days, more beautiful in the evening; or, like the spring, aglow with promise and the autumn, rich with golden sheaves; where good works and deeds have ripened on the field.

PREJUDICES are like hurtful plants; slight efforts eradicate them, if they be at once attended to; on the contrary, they grow with time, become inveterate, ex-

and far and near, and their numerous ramifications seize upon everything within their reach.

WE spend a great portion of our life in making blunders, and a great deal more in correcting them.

HE is a great simpleton who imagines that the chief power of wealth is to supply wants. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it creates more wants than it supplies.

"ORDER is heaven's first law," regularity is nature's great rule; hence regularity in eating, sleeping and exercise, has a very large share in securing a long and healthful life.

WE must look for happiness in the world, not in the things of the world; but within ourselves; in our tempers, and in our hearts.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Emperor of the French has contributed £5 to the Sheffield Relief Fund.

IT appears that the celebrated "fast" Alabama could, after all, only steam eight knots an hour.

COFFEE in roasting loses about 16 per cent. in weight.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT.—The pocket of Mr. Clay, M.P., was picked the other day in the lobby of the House of Lords.

A WOODEN church, to hold 360 persons, has been erected at Byrnawar, at the cost of £355, or only about £1 per head.

IT is reported that the heiress to the Brazilian throne is likely to marry the Austrian Archduke, Louis Victor. If so, the Hapsburg family will number three Emperors.

A BRISTOL eccentric has made a foolish attempt to ape Royalty by giving his son no fewer than eight Christian names—Christopher Charles James George Alfred Robert John Benjamin—

THIS story concerning the tragic death of the daughter of Governor Pickens, by a shell at Charleston, on the day of her marriage is a mere sensation one. Governor Pickens has no marriageable daughter.

IT is supposed that Mr. Noel Paton will succeed to the vacancy of "Linerer to the Queen for Scotland." The salary attached to it is the queer sum of £97.

THE sentimental description of the death of Madeline Smith's husband, and her following her "spouse" soon after to the grave, is not quite founded on fact. The couple emigrated, and are doing well in Australia.

THE Thessalia steamer the other day arrived at Liverpool from Alexandria, having on board the six-legged live cow on which £300 insurance had been effected at Lloyd's, at the rate of 20 guineas premium.

SEBASTOPOL.—The *Journal de St. Petersburg* states that the harbour of Sebastopol is being cleared of the hulls of the ships sunk at the entrance of the port at the beginning of the Crimean war. The same journal adds that in three years the railroad from Moscow to Koursk will be extended to Sebastopol.

THE new and remarkable species of the fossil long-necked sea-dragon, which has lately been on view at Mr. Gregory's, in Golden Square, has been secured for the British Museum. A description of it may shortly be expected from the pen of Professor Owen, by whom it has been named the *Plesiosaurus rostratus*.

FRENCH CURE FOR DEAFNESS.—At the last sitting of the Academy of Sciences M. Flourens presented an application addressed to him by Mr. Turnbull, a Scotch physician, who proposed to employ a method of his own on a certain determinate number of persons afflicted with want of hearing, and prayed the academy to appoint a committee—first, to ascertain the state of the patients before being submitted to the treatment in question; and, next, to report at the end of the year what had been the amount of the success arrived at. Dr. Turnbull has explained his method to M. Flourens, and will likewise communicate it to the members of the committee. He has described it in a sealed paper deposited with the academy, but wishes it not to be published until the expiration of a year. The academy, considering the subject of immense importance to humanity, at once appointed a committee, composed of MM. Flourens, Milne Edwards, and Bernard. The promptitude with which the decision had been come to reflects great credit on the academy. It appears that when Lord Brougham was lately in Paris, being anxious as always, to forward any plan likely to prove useful to his fellow-creatures, he gave Dr. Turnbull a letter of introduction to M. Mignet, and through him the matter was brought under consideration, and appearing to the academy to present every guarantee of success, was immediately disposed of, as stated above.

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

REV.—Pure wrought iron melts at 2,550 degs. Fahrenheit.  
R. L. M.—The diameter of the sun is equal to more than three times the distance from the earth to the moon.

MRS. S. H.—The handwriting is rather peculiar for a lady, but it is good.

OMEGA.—We are much obliged, but cannot accept your kind offer, our arrangements being complete.

M. M. B. S.—You will find the addresses you require in the Post Office Directory. Handwriting, good average.

CONSTANT READER.—Any police magistrate will grant you a protection order, the cost of which is very trifling.

O. Z.—Involuntary blushing is chiefly an effect of excessive nervousness, which induces a want of self-possession. The best remedy is to mix in society.

R. C.—A bride ought not to receive visitors without her mother, or sisters, or some intimate friend being present, not even although her husband may be at home.

JANE.—If the colour was taken out of the silk by acid, it may be restored by applying to the spot a little sal-volatile or hartshorn.

A. H. B.—We know nothing whatever of the persons named; nor, if we did, could you reasonably expect us to answer your inquiry more fully.

H. COOK.—Being in London, we wish you had done us the favour of calling at our publishing office. As it is, the publisher will attend to your request as soon as possible.

T. H. S., Leicester.—We doubt whether there is any institution in London with funds disposable for the purpose you state, but we will make inquiries for you.

NIOS.—It would have been better had you exercised a little more patience and forbearance; as matters stand, we do not see how you can with propriety make friendly overtures. Wait a little, and they will probably be made by him.

G. W. R.—We cannot tell what is the exact present value of an old Roman coin of the time of Claudius; but you will probably be able to dispose of it to any numismatist, or dealer in ancient coins.

TWO H.—The literary ex-capitals of Mexican Volunteers has no connection whatever (we believe) with the periodical in question. Handwriting gives promise of becoming very good, if you practice diligently.

HABOLD, who is eighteen years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, dark complexion, good-looking, and has a good position, wishes to obtain a matrimonial introduction to a young lady.

E. O. D., who is twenty-four years of age, rather tall and good-looking, and of an affectionate disposition, wishes to correspond with a gentleman matrimonially inclined, not under her own age, who may be disposed to accept the offer of her hand and heart.

JAMES H.—In the sixth report of the Civil Service Commissioners you will find all the information you can possibly require, and also see specimens of the received official handwriting. You need have no misgiving in this last respect, for your writing is very good.

ALEXANDER H.—"A May-day Walk" is declined with thanks, though we may possibly find space for the accompanying communication. We are much obliged for our correspondent's commendation of THE LONDON READER and kind efforts to extend its circulation among his friends.

CONSTANTIA.—The letters F. S. A. affixed to a name signify Fellow of the Society of Arts. An heraldic search for family arms would cost much more than the search for a will at Doctors' Commons. There are several heraldic offices where an inquiry could be conducted for you.

A. J. J.—Anything which you might do would doubtless precipitate the result which you wish to avoid, and induce the thoughtless girl to take the last step in her perversity. Reason with her; and if you have done your duty in her education, she must yield to argument and affection.

ADA, who is twenty six years of age, tall, stout, fond of business, has dark hair and eyes, dark complexion, of a lively and merry disposition, would be happy to meet with a gentleman about thirty-five or forty years of age, of dark complexion, good-tempered and fond of home.

BESSIE, a young widow, aged twenty-six, with hazel eyes, light brown hair, fair complexion, good-tempered, cheerful and a good housewife, would be happy to meet with a kind, good husband, possessing moderate income, fond of home, and of affectionate disposition.

MARIAN, twenty-two years of age, of medium height, slight figure, having black hair and eyes, dark complexion, of reserved, affectionate manners, good-tempered, and fond of home, wishes to marry; and would prefer a dark, sedate gentleman, possessing a comfortable income.

ADRIAN, who has travelled, would like to marry an agreeable lady about twenty-five years of age. He has a little money, and would with the lady to be also possessed of some. He is highly respectable, thirty-five years of age, has dark hair, of middle height, and considered good-looking.

LANCASHIRE GIRL.—There is, in your letter, so much evidence that you possess good sense, that we very much regret the want of the logical faculty which it so entirely displays. It is true enough that of one flesh all men were made, but you must know very well that races differ, and that the faculties, powers, and inclinations of nations vary with their geographical position; they do so also by

the accidental circumstances of birth and social position. It is a fact which admits of no dispute whatever; and we are at a complete loss to see the reasonableness of your objection to the particular expression of this fact which occurs in the tale that has met with your disapproval. However, to propitiate you again—for we must not lose you—turn to Chapter XIII of the "Fatal Secret," and when you have read what General Berkeley says there, we shall be glad to hear from you again.

DAISY.—We cannot recommend you to employ any of the advertised so-called apothecaries for promoting the growth of the hair, because we are not acquainted with their composition. But in No. 44 of the LONDON READER you will find a recipe on the subject which will no doubt answer the object which you have in view.

BERNARD E.—There are no natural means of arresting growth or preventing a person from becoming tall; it is just as impossible to do this, as it is to add a cubit to one's stature; though unsanitary conditions of living and early indulgence in dissipation undoubtedly will prevent the full and natural development of the figure.

JANE AND MARY.—We cannot tell you the flowers from which the scent called "Millefleurs" is obtained, for the very sufficient reason that, notwithstanding its floral name, it is not made from flowers at all. "Eau de Millefleurs" is chiefly obtained, by a chemical process, from the drainage of cowhouses!

LEZZIE AND ARNIE wish for a matrimonial introduction to two young gentlemen about nineteen or twenty years of age. "Lezzie" has dark complexion, light brown hair, and hazel eyes; "Arnie" has fair complexion, light hair and blue eyes. They are each eighteen years of age, and have nothing to offer but loving hearts.

## A WOMAN'S QUESTION.

Before I trust my fate to thee,

Or place my hand in thine—

Before I let my future give

Colour or form to mine—

Before I part all for thee,

Question thy soul to-night for me!

I break for thee all slender bonds,

Nor feel even one regret;

Is there one link within the past

That holds thy spirit yet?

Or is thy faith as clear and free

As that which I can pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmed dreams

A possible future shine,

Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,

Untouched, unshared by mine?

If so, at any pain or cost,

Oh, tell me, before all is lost:

Look deeper still; if thou canst feel

Within thy inmost soul

That thou hast kept a portion back,

While I have asked the whole,

Do not false pity spare the blow,

But in true mercy tell me so!

Is there within thy heart a need

That mine cannot fulfil?

A chord that any other hand

Could better wake, or still?

Speak now, lest at some future day

My whole life wither and decay!

Lives there within thy nature hid

The demon spirit, Change,

Shedding a passing glory round

On all things new and strange?

It may not be thy fault alone,

But shield my heart against thy own!

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day,

And answer to my claim,

That fate, and that to-day's mistake,

Not thou, had been to blame?

Some soothe their conscience thus, but thou

Wilt surely warn and save me now.

HELEN W. H.

DOUGLASS ROBERT.—The name of Ellen, or Helen, is from the Greek, and signifies alluring; and we think, from your description of yourself, must be rather appropriate. A *retrospect* is generally considered to give rather an arch or piquant expression to the face, and is not, as a feature, to be considered a blemish by any means.

LEICESTERSHIRE LAD, who is twenty-four years of age, good-looking, and respectfully connected, would be glad to enter into a matrimonial correspondence with a young lady of seventeen, accomplished and well-connected, and who would not object to a two years' courtship, nor a lover who, like the man of Ross, is "passing rich with eighty pounds a year."

T. F. D.—We cannot give you an infallible recipe for restoring hair that has fallen off, but an onion rubbed frequently on the part destitute of hair, will sometimes reproduce it, as the stimulating powers of this vegetable restore the tone of the skin, and assist the capillary vessels; the growth of the new hair may be assisted by applying the oil of myrtle-berries. (See also reply to "V. B. K.")

L. T.—A gentleman who wears a ring on the first finger of the left hand you may fairly infer wants a wife; if he is engaged, he would wear it on the second finger; if married, on the third, and if a sworn bachelor, on the fourth. A lady not engaged usually wears a ring on her first finger; if engaged, on the second; if married, on the third, and on the fourth if she is resolved to "die unmarried."

J. J.—We do not know that there is any explicit rule to regulate such matters; but, generally speaking, if a gentleman offers his left arm to a lady, or presents her with a flower, &c., with the left hand, it is supposed to indicate more than ordinary regard. If you have any real affection for the lady, however, this is a poor way of conveying it; better tell her so in plain English.

EMER and POLLY.—Any Gestebe in search of a wife must have very bad taste or be extremely haughty, if he can resist the attractions of either of these young ladies. "Emmie" is eighteen years of age, petite, with golden brown hair, languishing blue eyes, sings like Philomel, and plays divinely. "Polly" is fair, has languishing blue eyes, and splendid curly hair of a golden hue; age seventeen, musical,

and would like a gentleman fond of home comforts. It will be seen that both are pretty and piquant—especially POLLY (from whom we shall certainly expect the promised wedding-cake shortly.)

C. B.—It is certainly better for you in every sense that you have been unable to procure the information for which you seek, infidel writings being perilous reading to every one, but most injurious to the young. We must decline to assist your inquiries, and advise you to give up the search for such productions, and devote your leisure to more wholesome reading.

THESEIA I. A.—The meaning of the word "Selah" in the Psalms is this: According to Rabbinical and Christian writers a "chorus" is often met with in the poetical parts of the Scriptures, especially the Psalms; and "Selah," as a note in music, was written to remind the congregation, when they came to the parts so marked, that they might join in the music.

POLLY and LEZZIE are anxious to form matrimonial engagements. POLLY is tall and dark; is twenty-five years of age, possesses a loving heart, and intimates that she is favourably disposed towards "Nil Desperandum." LEZZIE is fair, of thorough business habits, twenty years of age, with a very loving heart; which she would not be indisposed to part with to "E. M. K." the widower. Both are good-tempered, and rather pretty; but neither possesses money.

AMATEUR.—You are in the male correct—the so-called "scarlet geraniums" are not geraniums at all; they are pelargoniums. Setting aside the scientific demonstration of the distinction between them, we may answer your question to say: Geraniums are plants with perfectly regular flowers, and ten perfect stamens; the so-called scarlet geraniums have neither regular flowers nor ten perfect stamens; therefore they are not geraniums.

CONTRAST READER.—For eruptions of the skin or face the following is a good remedy:—Flowers of sulphur, half a drachm; carbonate of soda, a scruple; tartarised antimony, one-eighth of a grain; make into powder, and take one night and morning. This may be followed by the external use of a lotion made thus:—Milk of bitter almonds, seven ounces; bicarbonate of mercury, four grains; spirits of rosemary, one ounce. Bathe the eruption with this three times a day. (See also No. 33.)

V. B. R.—A decoction of boxwood is frequently successful in cases of baldness, and you can make it thus:—Of the ordinary garden-border box take four handfuls, leaves and stems together, which boil in three pints of water, in a closely-covered vessel, for a quarter of an hour, then strain in a covered earthenware jar for something like an hour, strain, and add an ounce and a half of eau-de-cologne or lavender-water to perfume and preserve it. Wash the head well with this every morning.

EMER AND G.—Other points of personal beauty being equal, we certainly consider that a woman who possesses gracefully sloping shoulders must carry off the palm of superior loveliness from a woman who is endowed with broad shoulders, these last being more distinctly a masculine characteristic. But the discovery was made long ago which is hard to decide on points of female beauty; and we have known a duchess with the shoulders of a Hercules, and a milkmaid with those of a Hebe.

J. Y.—The origin of the name John being abbreviated in Jno. instead of Jon, is supposed to be that in former times the name was written Jhon more frequently than John, and the *h* often assumed the form of a *j*. John contracted into Jho, and the *h* being written like a *w*, would become Jwo. It is also supposed that the practice may have arisen from the circumstance that John was often changed into Johanna, which was frequently modified into Jon and Jno, and by simply omitting the *e* in the latter, the abbreviation would be obtained.

SCOTIA B.—The verses entitled "The Wedding Flag," we feel constrained to decline—not because they are not good poetry, but because they evince such indifferent patriotism. We can only hope that the lines are a mere translation from the Danish, and are not original; for we should regret that an Englishwoman could write anything in disparagement of her own national ensign, the glorious flag that has "braved the battle and the breeze" so long, and is the very noblest in the world besides being, as the poem truly declares, "the mightiest flag that flies on earth."

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—"G. W. D." and his friend "J. T." would be happy to correspond with "Ellin" and "May." "G. W. D." is 5 ft. 5 in. in height, twenty years of age, has dark eyes and hair, and holds a good position in the city. "J. T." is 5 ft. 8 in. in height, eighteen years of age, and has dark eyes and hair. They are both considered good-looking—"Marie" will be happy to open a matrimonial correspondence and exchange letters with "Nil Desperandum." She is five-and-twenty, tall, of dark complexion, good-looking, both accomplished and domesticated, and of very cheerful disposition—"Leah," who is a young widow, about 5 ft. 4 in. in height, with dark hair, blue eyes, and fair complexion, and of an affectionate disposition, would be glad to correspond matrimonially with "E. M. K." "E. F." a young widow within the stipulated ages, of medium height and dark complexion, has no objection to correspond with "Nil Desperandum."—"Q. E." would be happy to correspond with "May." It is tall, and considered handsome, with black hair and eyes, age twenty-four, has moderate income, and on the death of an aged uncle will come into possession of considerable freehold property.

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London: Printed and Published for the Proprietor, at 334, Strand, by J. E. GILSON.